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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the information exchanged among Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) projects and other U.S. Department of Education projects during a conference on promoting and supporting change through training and network development. The report begins with an overview of the results from the Interview Design Process Plenary Session, which aimed to foster awareness building and networking about the collective Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and TA&D Network goals of improving results for children with disabilities and their families. The second section includes summations of the plenary sessions and thumbnail sketches of the concurrent sessions, which were designed to build skills or increase the participants' knowledge base. The following section summarizes the workgroup discussions on elements of President Clinton's education initiatives and possible collaborative activities that might be taken in support of the initiatives. The final section summarizes discussions in the focus group sessions that indicate activities of interest to the participants during the conferences, as well as suggestions for other activities to undertake at future conferences. The report ends with a conference agenda and a participant list. Information is included about collaborative and innovative use of technology, along with copies of the OSEP logic model. (Author/CR)

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ED 427 479

REPORT OF THE OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

8th ANNUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION CONFERENCE

MARCH 2 - MARCH 4, 1998

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AND THE NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SYSTEM (NECTAS)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) convened the Eighth Annual Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Conference on March 2-4, 1998, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Washington, D.C. Representatives from OSEP's staff, technical assistance and dissemination projects, and regional resource centers (RRCs) attended the conference. The conference was organized by a joint collaboration between the Federal Resource Center for Special Education (FRC) and the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NECTAS).

The conference was made possible by the efforts of a national planning team that assisted the FRC and NECTAS in all aspects of development and presentations. We want to give special thanks to the members of this team:

Co-Chairs: Pascal Trohanis, NECTAS and Gary Rutkin, FRC

Eileen Ahearn, NASDSE
Nichele Ames, COPE
Patti Barkin, WRRC
John Copenhaver, MPRRC
Sara Conlon, NCPSE
Peggy Cvach, OSEP
Judy Elliott, NCEO
Paula Goldberg, PACER
Jim Hamilton, AIR
Isa Polansky-Joseph, SARRC
Michele Rovins, FRC

The purposes of the conference were to provide participants with an opportunity to:

- Increase knowledge in various topical areas related to technical assistance and dissemination.
- Exchange information, problem solve, and pursue collaborative activities with other TA&D colleagues.
- Be familiar with the resources/services/expertise of other U.S. Department of Education TA&D projects.
- Become a partner and a contributor to President Clinton's Education Initiatives in his *Call to Action* and the Secretary of Education's *Seven Priorities*.

The assembly of this proceeding document was made possible though a collaboration of the FRC and NECTAS with Counterparts, Inc. A special thank you for the thoughtful preparation of materials goes to Counterparts' Marie Keefe, Doris Leckie, and Cappie Morgan.

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INTRODUCTION

We no longer even understand the question whether change by itself is good or bad. We start from the axiom that it is the norm. We do not see change as altering the order . . . we see change as being order itself — indeed, the only order we can comprehend today is a dynamic, a moving, a changing one. — Peter Drucker

Change is foremost in the minds of people working within the Technical Assistance and Dissemination (TA&D) Network as they face helping people understand the impact of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 97) and contribute as partners to President Clinton's Education Initiatives in his *Call to Action* and the Secretary of Education's *Seven Priorities*. To address this issue directly, *Promoting and Supporting Change through Training and Network Development* became the topical lynchpin of the Eighth Annual Technical Assistance and Dissemination Conference, held March 2-4, 1998, at the Sheraton City Centre Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Today, there is a federal drive towards systemic change through performance-based work. To maintain a cutting edge, TA&D providers want to acquire skills required to address this effort and to be knowledgeable about current activities in the field within the network and at the federal level. The conference was structured in such a way as to allow for both training of skills that would strengthen participants' abilities to encourage change and the necessary sharing of information that would better inform them of what others are doing to promote change and that would give them a chance to collaborate towards that end. Throughout the conference participants had an opportunity to converse with the people who are directly responsible for creating and implementing IDEA 97 and the president's Education Initiatives.

This report sums up the information exchanged among TA&D projects and other U.S. Department of Education projects during this conference as well as skills gained and possible collaborative activities to nurture. Many of the topics arose from issues related to IDEA 97 and the president's Education Initiatives as well as interests expressed by participants at last year's conference.

The report has four sections. It begins with an overview of the results from the Interview Design Process Plenary Session, which aimed to foster awareness building and networking about the collective OSEP TA&D Network goal of improving results for children and youth with disabilities and their families. The interview process also served as a group interaction example for conference participants who may wish to utilize this in their own work.

The second section includes summations of the plenary sessions and thumbnail sketches of the concurrent sessions designed to build skills or increase participants' knowledge base.

The third section has summaries from the workgroup discussions on elements of the president's Education Initiatives and possible collaborative activities that might be taken in support of the initiatives.

The last section summarizes discussions in the focus group sessions as these indicate those activities of interest to the participants during the conference as well as suggestions for other activities to undertaken at future conferences.

We are pleased to include in this document abstracts on technology methodologies which are the outcomes of a year's work from the Workgroup on Innovative Technology conducted during last year's TA&D conference.

The report ends with a conference agenda and a participant list to allow participants to continue the dialogue begun at this conference. Also, we have enclosed some materials about Collaborative and Innovative Uses of Technology, as a by product of the previous year's conference. Finally, we have included copies of the OSEP logic model and Selected GPRA Requirements.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS
OF THE INTERVIEW DESIGN PROCESS ACTIVITY

The most valuable information I gained was from each of my face-to-face interviews, the validity of aggregate information isn't half as important as getting a "feel" for what we are all facing.
— Interview Design Group Observation

As one of the ways both to understand the current challenges that face the TA&D Network and to encourage the exchange of information among members to continue network development, the planning committee chose to have the full group participate in an interview activity. Each participant interviewed seven people. The interview questions and a description of the process are detailed under the plenary session descriptions, as are all of the responses from the group.

The major results are highlighted at the beginning of this report as, in general, they provide the context in which the TA&D Network is currently operating — some of the workplace challenges and issues that preaccompanied participants as they listened and engaged in discussion during the conference. They also gave network members an opportunity to consider possible collaborative activities, both at the conference and post-conference.

Challenges

TA&D Network members find that certain of their frequent requests are very challenging to respond to and often require assistance from several sources. Sustained and systemic change questions pose a challenge precisely because the system is undergoing change, and it is difficult to keep current and to pull together the threads of what is happening to give support to that particular client. The mandate for some is to make changes simultaneously across all parts of the system and this, obviously, is a difficult task with few examples of how to do it successfully. Complex questions about regulation or federal/state/local interaction that include responses from multiple agencies, also commonly face members. They have the same measure of difficulty as those questions that require facilitating/pooling of ideas of all the stakeholders or that are specific to one child in one situation with many variables. Too, providers find that they are often asked questions about IDEA 97 that have no clear answer.

Recommendations to Improve Referrals

Participants responded that the most important tool to improve referrals would be a common resource directory/database/website address document. Secondly, they indicated that referrals would improve if there were the trust that the referral would be efficient, expeditious, and appropriate. In addition they cited the importance of linkages with General Education, practical referral procedures, and face-to-face opportunities to help build a trusting relationship.

Collaboration Activities

When asked with whom they collaborated, participants' general response was "with everyone." The primary topics on which they collaborate include finding information about state-specific activities and resources and on specific disabilities, research on and application of best practices, and database management.

Gaps in Skills and Knowledge among Staff

Three gaps in skills and knowledge stood out as most frequently mentioned in the interview data. Participants feel staff lack knowledge of IDEA 97 policies and time lines on reform, in particular IEP development. They also indicated that there is a need for more in-depth knowledge in content areas. Of all of the skills that staff need, those creative group process skills of facilitation and strategic planning are mentioned as the most essential.

Skills and Knowledge My Organization Can Contribute to Professional Development of Other TA&D Providers

The two most frequently mentioned contributions participants offered were technology (database/web/Internet) and sources of content information. They also bring to other providers information management and tracking information, knowledge about design of performance indicators, and the ability to work at the local level.

Important Strategies for Assessing Work

Three strategies for assessment were mentioned equally. Providers find that client satisfaction surveys and interviews, focus groups, and case studies (for example, Tracer case studies) are most used and useful.

OSEP Contributions to a Successful Network

As OSEP and its TA&D partners work to improve results for children with disabilities and their families, it is important to examine the ways they support one another and those activities that most benefit TA&D clients. Providers indicated that collaboration among projects to provide comprehensive responses most benefit clients. They said that among OSEP's contributions, the most salient are fostering of communications, funding which makes TA&D a priority, and leadership which encourages collaboration among its projects.

Future Project Activities of the Network

No single activity appeared to be more important than any other. Among the activities network members indicated they might be doing: maximizing and applying technologies, participating in centralized sharing of information, using more research-based information, facilitating more collaboration on a common problem or theme, collaborating beyond the network to other TA&D providers, working more with LEAs, and making stronger connections to IHE.

The Challenge of Bringing Best Practices to Children with Disabilities

Tom Hehir
Director, Office of Special Education Programs
Washington, DC

I am pleased to be here because of the wonderful work you do to help improve the education of children with disabilities. It seems wherever I travel, I am always seated next to a parent of a child with disabilities. Recently, on a Boston to Washington, DC flight, I discovered that my fellow traveler had a son with significant disabilities and our discussion encapsulated the challenges that OSEP and the TA&D projects face. According to this man, his son had difficult behaviors, but he had done well in regular classes until the end of middle school. At that point, the local school district said that he had to go to a special residential school, because the local high school couldn't provide what he needed. The son was resentful at leaving the community and in the residential school a lot of things happened that left him worse off than when he had entered. He is now 17 and the district is trying to develop a program for him, but he presents some very significant challenges.

We who represent IDEA need to hear this story. This law is designed to bring state-of-the-art practices to children with disabilities, for children to get an effective education. For children with significant emotional disturbance, this story is too common. The ideal of the law has yet to occur, even in the hands of well-meaning people.

It is a fundamental challenge to bring best practices to the education of children with disabilities in this country, not merely an education. Our number one priority is improving our monitoring system in IDEA. This is because the issue is not one of monitoring only for compliance but rather monitoring also to bring best practices to a child's education. Some people think that Congress just wants procedures, not the true intent of IDEA. But we know that Members of Congress are as interested in holding states responsible for implementing education and being accountable for the educational results for children with disabilities as they are with non-disabled children. More than one half of children in special education are currently excluded from regular education. But in the future they will receive regular education thanks to IDEA 97.

We must look at results. Monitoring states is an important Federal function that needs to be improved. Our customers say that IDEA is a great law that hasn't been implemented well enough.

That is what your job is all about. We brought together a group of folks to find out how they would develop a plan to help implement the amendments to IDEA correctly. We want to start from the beginning to set schools up to be able to meet the requirements. At the state level we need to bring people more closely together with the SEAs and lead agencies. We need to monitor to see if there is a vigorous program of trying to bring best practices to children. There is a degree of consensus that OSEP must be a continuous improvement model, not episodic improvement. We do know effective models, but we often don't bring enough to the LEAs who don't know them. Monitoring should be data driven, more vigorous, with an emphasis on analysis of real data, not anecdotal data. We then need to use the data to improve what is happening — to ask the state: What is your drop-out rate? What are you doing as a state to prevent this from happening? What are you doing that may be excluding children with disabilities? States do a pretty good job of self assessing, but it is long over due for IDEA. We need to look at the states accepting their responsibility to implement IDEA.

Every state should be consuming your resources to be bringing best practices to the state. The State Improvement Program is an important vehicle to rachet up compliance with IDEA 97. First, States must be collecting the data and then bringing the best practices to LEAs in a continuous improvement process. When States don't, then it is up to the Federal government to enforce the law so that no child is denied what they have a right to under IDEA. I am impressed and appreciative of your commitments to help children with disabilities, to bring to life Judy Heumann's metaphor: *Join together to build America's Accessible House*.

Question and Answer Session:

Connecting Research to Practice:

Hehir was asked how he sees information flowing back and forth among the three boxes of the IDEA program logic model (Government Performance and Results Act — GPRA) presented earlier in the TA&D conference.

Tom Hehir responded that he would like to see a stronger connection between members of the TA&D network and OSEP's research program. He suggested several ways of improving communication:

- Joint meetings of research directors and TA&D personnel.
- Improved use of mass media to convey what is learned through research
- A greater effort on OSEP's part to synthesize and disseminate the research it has in hand.
- More extensive efforts to share this research not just with the TA&D network but also with everyday classroom teachers.

- Improved use of OSEP's web capacity to proactively convey research results.

Identifying and Responding to Real Needs Within States:

Hehir was asked for suggestions about ways to pinpoint different states' critical needs so that the TA&D network can be responsive. He responded that results from research gathered at the state and local levels should drive these programs and that this information is derived from:

- GPRA which will give hard data about children and youth in the states as Parts B and C of IDEA are implemented. This information will affect many things: the kind of research that is undertaken, the structure through which TA&D is delivered, and the activities that are then carried out.

- Large, long-term studies such as the National Longitudinal Assessment Study which includes rich and significant information. Studies such as this should be structured to yield clear data about educational programs, about the participation of people with disabilities in the workforce, and about many other issues. He emphasized that he believes that disability information should be a natural part of all regular national, state and local studies.

Hehir pointed out that there is very little good research available about youth with significant emotional disturbance. They are a diverse population with many sub-sets. Current research doesn't focus on them nor try to keep track of them in the various arenas in which they show up. Much more needs to be done to get good data on this population.

Interview Design Process

Jane Hange
Beth Dankert Sattes
Appalachian Educational Laboratory (AEL)
Charleston, WV

Interview Process

This session required full participation in a process that was aimed to foster awareness building and networking about the collective OSEP TA&D Network goal of improving results for children, youth, and families. Participants first experienced this process and then reflected on it together.

As participants entered the room they were asked to sit in two rows of chairs that faced one another. There were as many chairs as there were questions on the interview sheet. Each chair had a different colored interview questionnaire, color coded to the question they would be responsible for seeking information about; i.e., yellow would ask Question 1.

Facilitators asked participants to interview the person across from them on their predetermined question and record each person's response separately and without any interpretation. After three minutes had passed, the roles were reversed and the person facing them became the interviewer. Once this was accomplished, participants in one of the rows all moved over one chair, and this interview sequence was repeated. This was done until all participants in each row had interviewed all participants in the facing row, resulting in all questions on the sheet being asked of and by everyone.

Participants spent a couple of minutes looking over their notes and then conferred with the person in the facing chair about what they thought the major themes were in the responses to their question. Facilitators then asked participants to form small discussion groups by color-coded question (to identify a discussion leader, a recorder, a timekeeper, a reporter), to jointly determine what the common themes were in the interviews they had conducted, to write them out, and to report on them to the full group The following paragraphs contain the questions and the summary of responses from each small group.

Summary Responses to Interview Design Questions:
(The following are not necessarily in any priority order but reflect an aggregate of group responses unless otherwise noted)

1. Think about the requests that come to your organization from clients.

A *Which 3-5 requests do you receive most frequently?*

- Resources — sources of money and strategies to access
- IDEA 97 — What does it mean and implications for implementation?
- Specific information about disabilities
- To facilitate meetings
- Summarize information, data, policy
- Help develop interagency agreements
- What are other states doing?
- Questions from families that are child specific
- Questions from teachers that are child specific

B *Which of these requests are your greatest challenges?*

- Sustained change, systemic change.
- Facilitating/pooling IDEA 97s of all stakeholders.
- Answering questions about IDEA 97 when the answer is not clear.
- Idiosyncratic answers: an answer for this specific child in this specific situation, with many variables.
- Researching the answers to complex questions, especially those that include responses from multiple agencies, regulations, or federal/state/local interaction.

2. One goal of the OSEP TA&D Network is to be responsive to all client service needs. *What would enhance your ability to refer clients to other TA&D providers?* List two to three recommendations to improve referrals.

- Common resource directory/database/website addresses (the most important)
- Trust that referral will be: efficient, expeditious, appropriate (next important)
- What of what you do is/is not provided and to whom? The clients served, expertise of staff
- General ED linkages are important: IHE — higher ED involvement
- Practical, operable, clear, common, and concise referral procedure
- Face-to-face opportunity to help build a trusting relationship

3. Think about your connection with TA&D projects (e.g., projects inside or outside the USED).

A *With whom do you collaborate*? (Name by project)

- Everyone collaborates.

- Most common partners reported:
  - RRCs (RRFC)
  - PTIs
  - NECTAS
  - NICHY
  - National Clearinghouses
  - NTA/NTN

- Really good working knowledge of 1 or 2 primary projects or working organizations.
- There is a trend to collaborate outside USED, but it is not quite developed. People would like to do more of that.

B *What are the topics of these collaborative activities?*

- Information on state-specific activities and resources
- Information on specific disabilities
- Information strategies on the process for managing information, i.e., database management
- Research on best practices
- Application of best practices

4. TA&D organizations are asked by clients they serve to do many diverse tasks. Different skills and knowledge are needed to provide these various kinds of technical assistance.

A *What, if any, gaps in skills or knowledge exist among staff in your organization?*

- Knowledge of IDEA 97 policies and time lines on reform: IEP development (very important)
- More in-depth knowledge in content areas (very important)
- Creative group process skills: facilitation/strategic planning (very important)
- Use of technology
- Lack of diversity in staff
- More current information needed before being published
- Learning the OSEP TA&D Network: new staff/new projects
- Coordination of staff knowledge/expertise
- Better understanding of research methodologies

B *What skills and knowledge could your organization contribute to the professional development of other TA&D providers?*

- Technology: database/web/Internet (very important)
- Sources of content information (very important)
- Information management/tracking information
- Design of performance indicators
- Work with the local level

5. Think about assessing the long-term impact of your TA&D. *What strategies are best to assess your work and why?*

- Client satisfaction surveys and interviews (very important)
- Focus groups (very important)
- Case studies (e.g., Tracer case studies) (very important)
- Assessing the components of systems change (high and low impact)
- Documentation of products, contacts, and use (across time)
- Use of third party evaluator
- Anecdotal information (personal communication, testimonials)
- Measuring teacher implementation and student outcomes
- Review relevant data related to goals

6. OSEP and its TA&D partners are in service to improve results for children with disabilities and their families. Some of their work is at the network level and some is at the client level.

A *Name the most important ways in which the funding agency (OSEP) contributes to a successful network of TA&D providers.*

- Communications methods fostered, i.e., technology, *face-to-face meetings* like the annual TA&D conference, publications, materials
- Funding — making TA&D a priority and responding to stakeholders
- Leadership
- Encouraging collaboration among OSEP projects

B *Which of these activities most benefit TA&D clients?*
- Collaboration among TA&D projects — comprehensive responses (most important)
- Refining information delivery to different clients
- OSEP conveys to the field the funding priorities, timing of funding possibilities, and understanding of how to apply for resources

7. If we have a responsive and successful OSEP TA&D Network by the year 2000, *what will your project be doing in the network?* Describe three activities of the network and your part in the activities.

- Maximize use and application of technologies
- Participate in a centralized sharing of information
- By 2000, use more research-based information
- Facilitate more collaboration on a common problem, theme, or location (among TA&D providers)
- Know/collaborate beyond OSEP TA&D to other TA&D projects (i.e., CCs, RTECs, labs, etc.)
- Work more with the LEAs and local service agencies
- Make stronger connections to IHE

Process Reflection

The two facilitators of the Interview Design Process Activity explained that they had asked Gary Rutkin and Pat Trohanis to develop the questions which would give them the data they were interested in. Refining the questions until they were sufficiently explicit took discussion and time. They also explained that they had used this process in many settings in which there many people who would not normally talk to one another and from whom it was important to get their opinions.

Some participant observations:

- There was not enough time to adequately reflect on the responses.
- They had hurriedly filled out the survey.
- This process makes for a very level playing field; i.e., it eliminates barriers between professors and students, parents and professionals.
- I needed to narrow down and surface what I believe in to answer so quickly.
- Can we trust the data?

In general, participants felt that this activity was a good way to break the ice, to get a large number of people's opinions on the table, and to have people feel they were listened to. Most valued the information that they got directly in each one-on-one interview more than the aggregate data. It can serve as a springboard or prompt for further discussion and gathering more data.

Goal-Driven Management

The task of a 21st-century leader is to move people from where they are to where they have never been — by getting individuals to become more than they thought they could become and to accomplish more than they thought was possible. . . .But this is easier said than done. . . .The key is execution, and for that you need methods. —Jim Ball

James R. Ball
Co-founder and President, The Goals Insitute, Inc.
Author: *DNA Leadership through Goal-Driven Management*
Reston, VA

Jim Ball makes a parallel between cell theory and DNA and business corollaries to express his DNA Leadership approach. All living beings are made up of trillions of cells, each one having DNA in the center. That DNA contains in it the information codes or the *expression* for what the cell will become — whether it will become an eyeball or a finger cell. The same is true of organizations. They are made up of individuals and they have a DNA fabric, i.e., a Nordstroms is different from a Seven-Eleven store. What transforms individuals are their goals — the *expression* for what they will become.

The *DNA Leadership* approach invites managers to work on their people and the tools they use to do their work; to work on the environment making sure it is positive and nurturing, while avoiding Anacondas: people who demotivate and create a negative environment; and to work on goals and plans to achieve them. It is essential that participants begin by taking a look at where they are and how they got there — to analyze those activities that worked for them (and those that did not). Then identify someone else who has the same goal.

Ball then described a method for setting and reaching goals that included MOSAIC and GOALS. MOSAIC is a process for establishing criteria for measuring performance which includes six different levels of performance. His second session focused on using this method in small group settings. The five-step process of GOAL- Driven Management entails:

1. Get a goal. Write it down. Make sure it is laser clear.

2. Outline a plan to achieve that goal. Ask what is possible. What are the obstacles to what's possible, what do I need to do to remove the obstacles?

3. Act on that plan. Break it down into a weekly plan and monitor it.

4. Learn from your progress. Compare results with original expectations and modify the plan based on its context.

5. Systematize your efforts. Get the plan down to daily, weekly rituals that become habits.

During the question and answer session, Ball stressed that the mastery performance level must always be achievable and managers must always have a way to measure the criteria set and be committed to doing it. Otherwise it should be dropped from the job performance grid. He also reiterated that the more detailed and specific the goal is, the greater the chances of achieving the goal are. While it may take more time for management to jointly agree on the goal's specificity, this kinetic exploratory discourse will help imprint the goal on everyone and increase the success rate of individuals seeking to achieve that goal.

Updates on OSEP National Goals and Performance Indicators

Ellen Schiller
Research to Practice Division
Office of Special Education Programs
Ruth Ryder
Director, Division of State Monitoring and Improvement
Office of Special Education Programs
Washington, DC

This session addressed the federal government's expectations for the new performance goals and indicators that will be used to measure positive results for children with disabilities and their families served through IDEA 97.

Ellen Schiller

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) (PL 103-62) is one of the federal government's program management systems. This legislation is a result of Vice President Gore's Reinventing Government Initiative, and the result is that Congress will allocate funds based on the program outcomes identified in this legislation. Consequently, GPRA will now guide OSEP's work. It is therefore important that the TA&D Network clearly understand what these measures are, how data will be collected and used, and what impact this will have on TA&D work.

GPRA is a strategic plan with clearly delineated goals, objectives, performance indicators, and measures. Within the structure of GPRA, OSEP is accountable for the implementation of IDEA 97 in its holistic form (as opposed to line-item justifications such as specific research or

monitoring activities). Through its sub-sections (Part C, Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities; Part B, Children and Youth with Disabilities; and Part D, Discretionary Programs) the final broad-view outcome of IDEA 97 is intended to be one of fostering independent, productive citizens.

Ruth Ryder

Ruth Ryder reviewed for TA&D conference participants charts that identify:

1. Part B's nine objectives, related indicators, and strategies that can support accomplishing those objectives.

2. Part H's seven objectives and their related indicators and strategies.

The TA&D Network will be operating within these parameters; the charts are included in the Appendix.

The first annual performance plan in the implementation of GPRA will be launched in October 1998, and the first reporting date against identified outcomes will be March 2000.

Both Ellen Schiller and Ruth Ryder said that the program measurements shared during this session are still open for comment and input. TA&D members are invited to make suggestions that will improve this outcome-measurement process. (Please refer to the Appendix for copies of OSEP's logic model and selected GPRA requirements).

Q&A Session:

One workshop participant suggested that a strategy be added that proposes collaboration among federal agencies and state organizations to promote the goals of IDEA 97.

Q — Should network members share this current thinking with their constituencies?
A — The federal cross-disciplinary work group will disseminate this to the field. The TA&D Network is welcome to disseminate it as well.

Q — Will research related to GPRA go through existing research organizations, or will new data gathering efforts be funded, especially ones related to discretionary programs?
A — New ones will be created only where there are gaps in information gathering.

Updates on National Information Resources

The difference is that our distributive electronic repositories are no longer serving a well-defined group; now it is anybody asking anybody they can get their hands on anything they want to know. — Keith Stubbs

Keith Stubbs
Director
Resource Sharing & Cooperation Division
Director, ERIC, National Library of Education
Washington, DC

Isa Joseph
Information Coordinator
South Atlantic Regional Resource Center (SARRC)
Plantation, FL

The two presenters covered this topic by dividing up the presentation: Stubbs concentrated on describing four Internet information-sharing initiatives and Joseph updated the group on the progress that information coordinators had made in the field in the last year.

Contact information and descriptors of the four initiatives accompany this brief summary. The Education Resource Organizations Directory (EROD) has as its goal to help customers and reference staff identify and contact organizations that provide information and assistance on a broad range of education-related topics. The goal of the ED Web Site Redesign was to make the site easier for visitors to find what they're looking for among the 20,000+ files on the web site and on other ED-funded web sites. The Cross-Site Indexing (CSI) is new and is constructed to enable customers to find information on any of the 150+ ED-funded web sites using a simple search screen available at all sites. The Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) has as its goal to provide easy one-stop, any stop access to educational materials on the Internet.

Joseph described the efforts of the information coordinators to meet with their peers from the greater TA&D network to create linkages and facilitate collaboration among such groups as RRFC, NICHCY, Alliance 2000, ERIC, EMSTAC, DB-LINK. Jointly they developed a core set of values and functions for information coordinators which are included in this report. They also spent time exploring what is unique about each project and looking forward to what their objectives might be for the millennium. In addition, the group felt it was important to discuss how to evaluate their work to make sure it is on track and providing clients with what they need — to be held accountable for the core functions and to find strategies for improving services. Next year they intend to hold another meeting which will ask information professionals from General Education to join the mix of specialists and to broaden the dialogue.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Achieving Goals and Results through *Goal-Driven Management*

James R. Ball
Co-founder and President, The Goals Institute, Inc.
Author: *DNA Leadership through Goal-Driven Management*
Reston, VA

The workshop allowed participants to get hands-on practice with Jim Ball's MOSAIC concept, which he had presented during his plenary session. Each small group received the same case example-- that of a job position that was essential to a company's image and interaction with the public. In the roles of managers in charge of this function, each small group created the assumptions that were appropriate and necessary to the position and used the MOSAIC process to identify the primary spokes of that job as well as prepare a performance grid which specified the six possible levels of job performance from mastery to counterproductive.

The underlying premise of this discussion was that unless a manager is willing to define performance results, the manager is willing to accept any performance whatever. In the small groups much of the discussion revolved around what each person saw as essential to carrying out the job and then ascribing measurable and achievable expectations and prioritizing them for the different levels.

In the follow-up full-group discussion, participants indicated that the process had been more complex than they had anticipated, that each time they thought they had thoroughly described each level, they discovered they had omitted something. They found it valuable to do it in a group, as the group had a chance to better understand how each member valued different aspects of the performance. The exercise helped prioritize what the organization valued, not merely setting job priorities. Surprisingly, once the different layers were examined, the job definition became much more straight forward. Another aspect discussed was whether and how to monitor the different levels; i.e., how do you measure "a smile in your voice."

One group outlined the six levels of performance of MOSAIC on the *spoke* or aspect of a receptionist's job of providing information:

Mastery: Ongoing effort to keep up with outside efforts ("We don't do that, but so and so does"), with new projects and is enthusiastic.

Outstanding: Satisfactory level and can refer them to outside efforts and is positive about it.

Satisfactory: Knowledge of all in-house projects and people and is pleasant.

Acceptable: Knowledge of basic in-house information.

Intolerable: Information is confusing and is inattentive.

Counter-productive: Deliberate attempts to sabotage ("I know he's here, but I don't know where he is.")

Participants were interested in how to apply this process to some of the very broad goals they are given, for example, facilitating sustained systemic change. Although there was an understanding that everything has to be changed at once or the systemic change would fail, there was the concern that by its very breadth, the change then became impossible to facilitate. Ball countered that it was essential to first define the system, perhaps with six big wheels and then six subspokes. Then managers could decide where the organization is really out of kilter and focus on that goal. He advised that at any given level an organization should not have more than three thrusting goals. He also noted that if a group can go to the mastery level on some significant goal, then the entire organization will have a bell wether that can be used to recognize excellence.

Discerning the Key Underlying Obstacles (Internal and External) In Strategic Planning

Marilyn Crocker, Ed.D.
Marilyn Crocker & Associates, Inc.
Warwick, RI

This information workshop demonstrated to participants a holistic strategic planning process that can be used to move forward agendas related to systems change and development. Four basic steps were presented as a model sequence for carrying out plans. Within this sequence, the workshop's discussion focused on identifying key internal and external resources as well as obstacles to achieving any vision. The overall planning process was outlined as:

1. *Identifying the Context for Action* — The first step involves setting a target (or mission) and agreeing on the values that will undergird action.

2. *Analyzing the Tools at Hand* — This step includes identifying basic information (history of the situation as well as relevant forces in the current environment), clarifying assumptions about factors at hand, agreeing on a vision (the dream of what success would look like), and pin-pointing both distinct advantages and specific obstacles that affect accomplishing that dream.

3. *Planning* — This stage involves having all parties involved agree on the precise indicators of the group's success as well as on actionable strategies and specific tactics they can use to reach their goal.

4. *Implementing* — The final phase includes specifying the practicalities of implementation such as: Who does what? How do individuals and teams operate? How is accountability handled? What mechanisms redirect the plan as things change along the way?

Using one of President Clinton's national goals as an example (that of having talented and dedicated teachers in our country's classrooms), Marilyn Crocker walked the group through the previously described steps as a way of showing how this process can be used to move forward an agenda.

The processes she herself used to help the group examine at how it might fill classrooms with splendid teachers were:

- Always keeping an eye on the prize (looking at resources, obstacles, and actors in terms of the end-goal) and communicating clearly with those around you to make sure that this goal is understood and shared.
- Using brainstorming as a way of sparking people's outside-the-box thinking.
- Avoiding personalization — no one person can block a compelling vision.
- Identifying concrete barriers (what *is* rather than what isn't).
- Recognizing that frequently we ourselves are the largest impediments to progress, when we unconsciously think that something cannot be achieved.
- Identifying the specific interior "spirit blocks" or the "face of the enemy within" that keeps us from winning.
- Using the power of symbols, of culturally related actions, and of celebrations to move an agenda forward.

Dr. Crocker posits that if this process were used to tackle President Clinton's seven goals of education for this country, one by one—or any other personal or professional mission— common threads would be found among resources as well as among obstacles, and bold moves could be devised that would creatively build on those resources, address the impediments, and leverage strengths to achieve the agreed-upon vision.

Research to Practice - Hot Topics

The presenters decided to approach this session by each giving a brief presentation and following the three presentations with a discussion period so that the experience of participants could be brought to bear on overlapping issues.

Issues in Reform
Don Dailey
National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
Arlington, VA

Because reform is going on in education, it is a very important time to be looking at students with disabilities within General Education as this reform should apply to all students. What we are finding falls into three major categories. Firstly there is a great deal of variation of standards across state districts. Secondly there is the issue of alignment of General Education and Special Education: a) aligning the common standards for all students and the individual goals in curriculum found in IEPs , and b) alignment of professional development (in some places there is co-development; in others professional development is conducted completely independently for Special Education and General Education). Lastly is there the capacity at the school level to include students with disabilities? This capacity depends on the knowledge and skills of all of the faculty; the necessary human and physical supports for these students; the social relations among the faculty (between Special Education and General Education); how the school is organized (i.e., is it off by itself?); the leadership to mobilize faculty and resources for all students; and, finally, the deep-seated, overarching beliefs that affect these issues.

Assessments and Accountability
Judy Elliott
Senior Researcher
National Center on Education Outcomes (NCEO)
Minneapolis, MN

Some elements of assessment and accountability are now on the front burner because of IDEA 97. States need to align performance goals and indicators with assessment. It becomes important to assist parents to understand assessment, to create formats that are friendly. Unique target populations need to be taken into consideration in assessment as well as similar issues that English language learners face. Another issue to take into account is the way alternative assessments eventually become defined — for some, alternative assessments is for kids with cognitive delays, thus advancing a more segregated approach.

There is a shift in thinking about educational accountability from the sole question of is the student getting services to additionally encompassing is the student learning. This can only be discovered

if a system is accountable for all students by making sure that all students participate in the evaluation program of the educational system and included when reports are made.

Accommodations for students with disabilities must start in the classroom, and states then must decide which ones roll over into the tests and into district assessments. In order to be accountable, there is the huge issue of personnel development. First it is necessary to determine what issues need to be changed and then to consider the impact on preparing staff.
In sum, there's a lot of reform going on, but not as much is happening in the development of testing accommodations. A lot more work needs to be done in determining statewide reporting procedures and in staff development to promote the implementation of assessments for students with disabilities

General Curriculum
Sharon Healy
Montgomery County Public Schools
Montgomery County, MD

Previous speakers talked about what needs to be done; this segment elaborated on what is going on in Montgomery County to support students with disabilities in school reform. The county has developed its own assessment system for grades 3-8, and currently high school assessment is being developed to get a diploma.

One of the struggles is to have high standards and yet to let everyone into the education system. The issue then becomes that curriculum development needs to infuse practice with ways to make kids successful, so that they can meet high standards rather than the assessment knocking them out of the system. It is important not to limit this thinking to students with disabilities. Strategies are needed for lots of kids, such as ESOL students. The University of Kansas, for example, has developed a lot of strategies so that all kids can benefit. When it comes to literary themes, a strategy is to have a whole lot of books available in the class room at different reading levels, including books on tape.

The county has responded to a real need for change. With the assessment system developed for the county, it now has real math teachers teaching algebra to special education students using aides so they can support their kids in algebra. They need to learn to not wait, to get in there and get involved. Healy is the Coordinator for Special Education Instruction and meets regularly with principals to help them understand the shifts in Special Education. On a monthly basis she meets with special educators and regular resource teachers together. It is as important to get special education teachers to talk to one another as to general education teachers. Special Education teachers often look for an invitation from General Education teachers to participate. She also finds that there is a need to raise the tolerance level in General Education for diversity, not limited to students with disabilities.

Discussion

Participants were interested in what efforts are being made to link assessment and transition to work. Presenters agreed that it is one of the critical issues that really needs a lot of work. The question of how to decide what is the best curriculum for special students raised issues of regular diplomas and IEP diplomas, and the impact on the student of good monitoring at the local level. It was pointed out that education can be viewed as a triangle with placement, instructional practices, and curriculum at each point, but that the most controversial one is the issue of placement. Within the rubric of "accountability for all" it is clearly important to examine whether and how special education students are being included—to learn what questions must be asked of schools, such as which special education students are noted in the data, and to help them understand that for the most part the inclusion of data on students with disabilities in the aggregate data doesn't make the major difference in scores that is often feared.

GPRA and the New OSEP Guidelines for IDEA 97 Implementation

These indicators have been floating around for several years. There is no surprise here. Logic models can help us prioritize daily. They give us a cleaner picture of our goals and roles. They also help all of us to be singing from the same song sheet. I am pleased to see this. It is a positive change. —Workgroup member

Maurice McInerney
Senior Research Analyst
Kerry Pisacane
Research Assistant
Elementary and Middle Schools Technical Assistance Center
American Institutes for Research
Washington, DC

This workshop built on the GPRA discussion led by OSEP on the first day of the TA&D conference. It was an informal, substantive exchange about the potential effects of GPRA (with its ambitious data-collection goals) on the implementation and measurement of IDEA 97, on research-to-practice issues, on the TA&D Network, and on the role of technical assistance. The workgroup addressed the following questions:

Should research-based knowledge be communicated through OSEP's TA&D Network?

Everyone agreed that this is an appropriate role for the network to play. A participant commented that when one says "research to practice," the TA& D Network is the "to." Several network members pointed out that they cannot wait for all practices to be research-validated. Network members must go ahead and operate while the research is being conducted. "We research *as* we fly."

Should the network itself identify the standards for research-based knowledge?

Participants agreed that they are still struggling to come up with a definition of what research-based knowledge is. Repeatedly this workgroup tried to articulate the point where research and "craft" intersect, one being described as from-the-top statistical information (frequently collected by outside evaluators) and the other as experiential, usually local, possibly unproven approaches. They described certain educational programs as being heavily researched and widely disseminated, but not necessarily turning out to be as "successful" in the field as local ones. For example, *Handwriting Without Tears* was described as a teaching approach that does not have a strong base of research to support it, yet it is seen by many involved in the craft of teaching as being an excellent instructional tool.

There was agreement that, as the TA&D Network disseminates information, it needs to share whatever research lies behind practices, *including* any questions that exist about these practices that haven't been answered. The group agreed that effort should be put into increasing the dialogue between researchers and practitioners (users). Communication should be a two-way street. They also agreed that who one works with directly (i.e., the clients) should determine what is shared in terms of practices. Practitioners should work to have in hand an array of help, rather than one approach. TA providers must also remember that they are just one of many helping hands, and you must take into account the broad spectrum of advice clients may be getting.

How does GPRA affect the providing of technical assistance?

During the discussion of the nature of technical assistance, group members made comments about what TA providers do including: "We have a responsibility to help clients clarify their questions and then to give them relevant information that can help them make informed decisions. Their responsibility is to make the advice/information work." Also: "Part of our job is to facilitate a reasoned discussion based on research, craft, experience, values, and law. We are brokers, honest ones we hope."

Examining the role of technical assistance in light of the new GPRA requirements, participants expressed some fear that federally mandated data collection could become the tail that wags the dog. The group discussed whether TA should be a strategy for implementing public policy, or perhaps the primary shape and content of TA should be determined by the needs of communities. A question asked was: "What kind of data should we collect both to respond to GPRA *and* to best serve our clients?" Participants seemed to agree that because of GPRA there will be an accountability for outcomes that was not there before and that the TA&D Network will be a tool of this. If GPRA maintains its focus on final outcomes (creating independent, productive citizens), it will, in effect, be acting out a client focus. Certainly this parallels what the TA&D Network is trying to achieve.

How can research-based knowledge be coordinated among TA&D providers?

Participants agreed that, by virtue of being TA&D providers, they are linking agents. They connect teachers who have needs with available resources. Thus coordination to capture needs and to share access to available resources is critical.

A participant from OSEP reminded the group that GPRA is the law and that the TA&D members are the middlemen. They will be the describers of GPRA's goals to communities as well as the deliverers of data from the communities. Members of the network were strongly urged to collaborate in collecting data and in using multiple approaches to pull it together. The FRC clearly has a role in this data collection and synthesis.

The workshop ended with the reminder that one of the responsibilities of the TA&D Network will be to operationalize GPRA in a way that positively impacts on the 5 million young people with disabilities so that they can become independent, productive citizens.

Research to Practice - Hot Topics

Positive Approaches to School-Wide Behavior
David Osher, Director
Mary Quinn, Deputy Director
Anthony Sims, Research Analyst
Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice: Improving Services for Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Problems
Washington, DC

Osher, Quinn, and Sims described the resources and approaches of the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice, putting special emphasis on the IDEA 97 that the way to improve outcomes for SED kids may be neither to "fix" the kid nor to kick him/her out of a regular school, but rather to focus on changing the *environment* in which the young person is operating. This environment means the classroom, the community, and the family. The underlying concept here is that supportive environments create a positive platform on which interventions can take place and young people can build positive lives.

Interventions can be viewed as having three levels. *Primary prevention* targets all students and addresses the needs of 80 to 85 percent of young people in a school environment. Emphasis here is on broad prevention actions such as implementing consistent discipline codes and teaching expected behaviors. These procedures not only avert misbehavior in the majority of students, but also decrease the severity of behavioral problems in students at risk for developing more severe difficulties. *Secondary prevention* measures are more intense and individualized. These measures include special classes, small-group interventions, and individual behavioral contracts. This level of interventions can take care of 7 to 10 percent of young people in a school. *Tertiary preventions* are for the 5 to 8 percent of students who have severe, chronic problems and usually

cannot be reached by the first two levels of prevention efforts. These interventions are highly individualized, incorporate wrap-around services, and emphasize protection and control. All of these intervention levels involve the whole school community, including all its support workers such as bus drivers and cafeteria personnel. The IDEA 97 is that only as the entire school environment becomes part of a prevention and treatment approach can young people with SED be positively integrated into a school setting.

The leaders of this session also spoke about resources available to the TA&D network through the Center for Elementary and Middle School Technical Assistance. A wealth of information is available about both the centers and about their philosophies and approaches through their websites:

> Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice: Improving Services for Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Problems: www.air-dc.org/cecp/cecp.html
>
> Elementary & Middle Schools Technical Assistance Center: www.air.org/emstac

One response from workshop participants was that if entire educational environments are being targeted for change, the best way to explore this possibility would be as part of this country's current overall school restructuring movement.

Autism
Joicey Hurth
Associate Director
National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NECTAS)
Chapel Hill, NC

Autism continues to be a current "hot topic" in the disability field for three reasons. First, in the past few years the incidence of the diagnosis has sharply increased the numbers of reported cases of autism are now the same as Down Syndrome, and the numbers of requests for information about autism through NICHCY rival requests for materials on ADD. Second, there is great controversy about the methods of treatment; some parents are requesting for their children not thoroughly researched but extremely expensive interventions. Third, early intervention and special education personnel are requesting a great deal more help in dealing with autism.

In 1997, two national conferences were held by NECTAS on autism. This has resulted in the development of certain products that will be useful to the field, the fleshing out of related issues, and the identification of common treatment approaches as well as program structures.

NECTAS has developed abstracts of projects related to autism funded under the Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities (EEPCD). This information is maintained at the NECTAS website: www.nectas.unc.edu/eepcd/projects.htm/

Parent/Family/Community Involvement
Sharman Davis Jamison
Co-Director
Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Center
Minneapolis, MN

In October 1997, the PACER Center (Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights), Minnesota's parent center, received from DOE a five-year grant of $4.2 million per year to carry out the Alliance Project. This project provides technical assistance for establishing, developing, and coordinating Parent Training and Information (PTI) centers and projects in each state under IDEA 97. These centers provide training and information to parents of infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and to professionals who work with these children.

Sharman Davis Jamison is co-director of the Alliance. She is also the parent of an autistic daughter who is deaf. Ms. Davis Jamison described the goals of the Alliance as being to:

- Provide sufficient funds to ensure that PTI centers and Community Parent Resource Centers have the technology they need for on-line access.
- Help centers share what they are doing as well as their best practices. This is done partly through an electronic newsletter.
- Encourage systems change and school reform.
- Provide TA to all centers so that they can get out correct information about IDEA 97 and can help determine how it is playing out in their state.
- Advise the centers (many of which are small, non-profit companies) about key program management issues such as board development.
- Hold national conferences such as the one in January 1998, that drew 250 people, many from the TA&D network.
- Oversee four institutes: transition, leadership and diversity, leadership and management, and IDEA 97.
- Increase the capacity of each PTI by setting up databases on:
    1. PTI's own materials — best practices, good sources of training, other information relevant to their mission.
    2. Information from the world at large that is family friendly.

3. Information about multicultural issues and diversity

- Increase cultural competency and accessibility in publications and technical assistance activities.
- Collaborate with national data sources such as NICHCY and ERIC, with national initiatives such as school reform and the Goals 2000 initiative, and with local resources such as businesses and the media in order to discover and disseminate information that will strengthen the PTIs.
- Evaluate themselves as TA providers.
- By the end of 1998, help five PTIs to become experts on certain topics (yet to be chosen).

Davis Jamison says she is eager for the TA&D Network to know more about the Alliance's purpose and activities. She welcomes suggestions from anyone.

Principles of On-line Course Design and Facilitation

Judith Zorfass
Arlene Remz
National Center to Improve Practice (NCIP)
Educational Development Center
Boston, MA

This session had the goals of creating an awareness of what is possible to do on-line, to lay out the beginning planning stage, an awareness of what is needed to support on-line facilitators, and some strategies that offer that support. Remz and Zorfass based the discussion on their experience designing and facilitating three on-line workshops.

Participants explored the similarities and differences between a face-to-face workshop and an on-line one. This kind of comparison initiated the kinds of design principles essential to both kinds of workshops and those needed, in particular, for on-line activities. Obviously it requires clarity of expectations and the purpose of the workshop. Next, certain strategies are needed to promote the on-line discussion — to create an interactive learning environment that motivates people to participate, models desirable on-online behavior, values participants' contributions, and establishes norms for interaction. Important elements to take into account as courses are designed include accessibility, ease of use, graphics, the ability to post messages with embedded links to other pages. In addition, participants discussed which activities and information should be on-line, which ones should be off-line, as well as what the best mix is, including the use of other media.

SETT was introduced. The acronym stands for each different element to consider when selecting assistive technology for students with disabilities—S=student, E=environments, T=tasks, T=tools. The essence of SETT is to have key stakeholders jointly assess the student's needs, the learning and home environments, and the tasks in which the student is required to engage. They then collaboratively recommend an appropriate system of technology tools and support. On-line workshops use a case study to ground the discussion; for example, the workshop might be structured as a Virtual Team Meeting. Conversations are then sequentially focused on the student, environment, tasks, and tools — each topic being assigned a week in length and in the aforementioned order. Every few days, facilitators distill key ideas from participants' messages into a chart and each idea is linked back to the original message so that participants can access the complete text.

Evaluation is essential to strengthen and improve the current work, to determine the extent of participation, the impact of the workshop on participant knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs, as well as to make any necessary revisions. One way to study implementation, for example, is to have participants engage in a reflective activity and to supplement that with quantitative data such as how many messages were posted, when, and by whom. Participants were very interested in the tips instructors offered to help ensure that people using an on-line course be successful.

WORKGROUP SESSIONS

Having a Department of Education representative present on an initiative to get workgroups started was a very nice model. — Participant in Focus Group Session

Topical workgroups were set up to correspond to four of the Secretary of Education's *Seven Priorities* and the President's *Call to Action*. These sessions gave participants a chance to increase their awareness of research, state-of-the-art practices, and information resources about a topic area. Participants could also become aware of upcoming OSEP TA&D and other activities and initiatives in this area as well as find opportunities to explore possibilities for developing future individual TA&D projects and/or collaborative TA&D project activities to address clients' needs in that area.

Each workgroup evolved differently. All of them took advantage of the opportunity to include outside presenters, often people responsible for the federal response to some of these initiatives. One group spent the entire session listening to presenters and asking them questions. Others shared the activities they were currently involved in that were pertinent to the initiative; others suggested potential activities and prioritized them, and others created collaborative activities and decided to continue the dialogue electronically. The following are summaries of sessions submitted by each group.

Workgroup: Assessment and Accountability

Facilitators:
Gary Dannenbring
Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC)
Des Moines, IA

Ken Olsen
Mid-South Regional Resource Center (MSRRC)
Lexington, KY

Identifying Issues

The following are the issue areas identified at the beginning of the workshop, and the specific questions or issues raised by group members. At the end of the session, each person selected the three topic areas they felt to be the most critical at this time. The total number of votes for each area is indicated. The issue areas are listed in order based upon the number of votes they received.

Standards (10 votes)

- What standards to use as the basis for alternate assessments?
- Alternate assessment — alignment with standards. What standards?
- Criteria for "acceptable."
- What indicators exemplify good student outcomes?

- Hold all kids to high standards, including students with disabilities.
- Content and performance standards.

Communication (7 votes)
- Producing and disseminating parent-friendly materials (including information on best and promising practices).
- Information for parents on including students with disabilities in state assessments.
- How to get information on standards to local schools and teachers.
- Figuring out exact requirements of the law.
- Whether there *must* be large scale assessments for young children with disabilities.

System vs. Individual Accountability (5 votes)
- Getting state stakeholders to view alternate assessment as *system* accountability.
- Alternate assessment: diversity/range of targeted students with very individualized goals.
- Part C and Preschool: *Relevant performance goals* — are they child specific or program specific (is there one set for all, or an aggregate of unique goals)?

Consequences (3 votes)
- By what measures can we hold teachers accountable for student outcomes?
- Impact of test scores on schools — possible backlash for students with disabilities.
- Use of data to drive instruction— accountability data vs. institutional data.
- Getting beyond technical implementation to focus on benefits.
- Coming to emotional terms with the requirements.

Target population (3 votes)
- Defining eligibility for alternate assessment without being too broad.
- Developing guidelines for who takes what, and appropriate accommodations.
- Does accountability for program outcomes refer only to children exiting, or to all children in the program?
- Not excluding young children in development of school-age measures and processes.

Measurement Challenges (2 votes)
- Appropriate measures for young children with disabilities.
- (Related to IDEA 97 Part C requirement): How to measure child progress and performance for 0 to 3-year olds.
- Assessment of LEP kids for disability.
- Options for alternate assessment.
- What instruments are available for alternate assessment?

Consensus Building
- Reaching consensus on parameters for standards.
- A system for NTAC that interfaces with multistate projects.
- Getting parents and kids to buy in (system accountability).

- Forums for debate about critical issues are needed.

Getting The Job Done

- Gearing up to responding to accountability.
- Implementing requirements for district rather than statewide assessments.

Reporting

- Alternate assessment: scoring and reporting.
- Including children with disabilities in "normed" data; where do they fit?

The following summarizes discussion of resources and activities, other hot issues, and ways in which projects can collaborate.

Resources and Activities

- NCEO Alternate Assessment DB
- SCASS-ASES
  - Report on accommodations
  - Parent brochure-disk
  - Video tape
  - Alternate assessment models
- SCASS-Technical Guidelines
- NCEO
  - Training RRCs and affiliates in March
  - Training/working with state teams on alternate assessments in June
- PEER-developing book on assessment: state-by-state summary answering eight questions — mostly parent data. Due out in March.
- NECTAS task force of six to seven states looking at issues of Part C. They are meeting in July.
- AIR-Project P.A.S.S. - validation of an instrument for secondary/exiting students.

Other Hot Issues

- A lot of questions, etc. Would like to be able to have information disseminated. Judy mentioned the NCEO Datalinks.

What We Might Collaborate On

- Communicate what is happening/resources (all share with NICHCY).
- Being accountable for young children — keep this issue on the forefront.
- Use TA&D listserv to share activities, resources, and issues.
- Join the RRFC workgroup conference calls — Gary will post the time and date of the next call on the TA&D listserv.

Workgroup: Safe, Drug-Free, Disciplined Schools

Facilitators:
David Osher
Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice: Improving Services for Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavioral Problems
Washington, DC

Carl Smith
Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (MPRRC)
Des Moines, IA

The purpose of this session was to focus on President Clinton's *Call to Action* as it relates to making sure our nation's schools are safe, disciplined and drug free. Issues this workgroup was asked to address included discipline, behavioral issues, prevention, and positive intervention strategies as they relate to achieving the president's goal in this area. The discussion was intended to increase the awareness of research, state-of-the-art practices, and information resources about this topic; to be aware of upcoming OSEP, TA&D, and other activities in this area; and to explore ways to develop new TA&D project activities to address clients' needs related to achieving this goal.

The workgroup set out to identify and prioritize a set of activities the TA&D Network could work on to achieve this particular national goal, and then to charge the network's Mental Health and Service Coordination Workgroup, chaired by Carl Smith who co-led this workgroup, to expand its ranks in order to include whatever additional people or resources are needed to pursue the activities it has identified and begun to prioritize.

Early in the discussion, it was pointed out that within the next four months the DOE will release five reports on school violence, including incidence and victimization data. A question that is important *because it is asked not infrequently* is, "How many young people involved in violence are IDEA 97 kids?"

Context-Setting Comments:

Factors identified by the workgroup as setting a context for their discussion were:

- Recent statistics show that for the first time this year there has been no real increase in drug use among middle school and high school students.
- For the most part, schools are safer nowadays than the communities young people live in.
- The Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program is dedicated to making it possible for young people to be safe in schools.

- Prevention program monies can be used for school security, although they are not frequently used this way.

- 1997 prevention programs are all too similar to 1987 programs, although the young people in schools and the problems they face have changed.

- Schools are being pressed by the federal government to develop behavior prevention programs that are research-based and have been formally evaluated. This is a way that the government is tying research to practice. Technical assistance is available to school districts to do this.

- DOE's 1999 Safe, Drug-Free Schools budget includes $60 million in additional funds to hire coordinators in middle schools, partly to act as agents who can transfer research to practice vis a vis discipline, violence prevention, and drug prevention. This has a lot of potential as a staff-development initiative.

- A great deal of national data exists in the federal offices of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Special Education, Juvenile Justice, and Delinquency Prevention. This information needs to be synthesized and disseminated. Also, joint efforts among offices need to be developed.

- Studies also have been conducted on the results of school-to-work programs and on the outcomes of various special education initiatives. These results, too, need to be studied, synthesized, and shared with the field.

- Work is being done in four sites (San Antonio, Memphis, Cincinnati, and Washington, DC) to look at how collaboration at all levels can be accomplished to achieve the agenda of safe and drug-free, disciplined schools.

- The real difficulty is taking all the things we know (the research-to-practice information) and applying it constructively at the local level.

National Issues Identified by the Workgroup as Having Impact on Achieving Safe, Drug-Free, Disciplined Schools:

The workgroup identified the following issues as important for making progress in achieving President Clinton's goal. The group agreed to continue working to cluster these issues, prioritize them, and address them.

- ***Increasingly younger kids are exhibiting negative acting-out behaviors.***

It was mentioned that this is partly an early intervention issue. Success stories are being collected by NASDSE and will be shared with this workgroup.

- ***A PR campaign needs to be waged to convince the world that "ALL kids can learn."***

This philosophy underlies all issues and activities related to education.

Both for kids and for people in the mix of systems around them, the power of the "Hawthorne Effect" can be recognized and put to work. This is the attitude that "People *do* care about me. I *can* have an effect."

Conveying this positive philosophy is a social marketing issue. A specific, vigorous strategy needs to be developed to promote the idea that we (all involved, not just educational systems) can make a real difference with young people.

Hard data exists to support this perspective; this data needs to be rallied to promote the cause.

Some of the most effective data can be conveyed through stories — qualitative data versus quantitative.

A positive focus can be on capacity building.

- ***Achieving safe schools involves not just educators, but everyone in a child's environment.***

ALL the players in a child's life need to be involved with helping children learn and realize their potential — family members, people from the community, support workers at schools (bus drivers, cafeteria personnel), recreation program leaders, business people, and many others.

The interfacing of the various systems involved with youth is critical if change is to be brought about. These systems include schools, juvenile justice, mental health, and social services, both public and private. A key issue that needs to be studied is the interface between the school system and all these other systems.

- ***Dissemination of information is critical.***

The TA&D Network needs to have a dissemination strategy for all the information it has at hand related to achieving safe, drug-free, disciplined schools.

Resiliency research is particularly important. It should be studied with an eye to policy and practice.

All those involved in schools need to be results and outcomes focused.

- ***A balance point needs to be found between crediting research data and dealing with immediate needs.***

  At times it is worth waiting to have hard data before picking a direction. At times immediate action has to be taken before the results of studies are in.

- ***All actions related to achieving President Clinton's national goal need to be child- and family-focused.***

- ***Cultural diversity must be taken into account.***

  This includes different languages as well as different cultural backgrounds.

- ***Discipline to modify behavior should always have a positive focus.***

  Expulsion from school for two to three days can be a real turn-around move for a "good" kid but can be a step-back for a truant. The rules of discipline must take into account the individual involved.

  Either throwing kids out of school or encouraging them to drop out only moves the problem to the larger community. Exclusionary strategies have real shortcomings. They convey a sense of punishment. They can promote isolation. Equally importantly, they can foster negative connections among young people for destructive purposes.

  Ways need to be found to promote the notion of positive discipline. Research exists to support this. It should be surfaced and shared.

- ***Interim alternative educational settings may be one strategy for achieving safe schools.***

  Questions that need to be addressed are how does one set up this alternative and what is an effective way to put it to good use.

- ***Another issue that is key to having safe, drug-free schools is staff development.***

  Training of professionals (both preservice and inservice) is critical to achieving this national goal.

At the end of this workshop, the participants agreed to continue as a working group. They named themselves "The Village" and set a meeting via conference call the afternoon of April 7, 1998.

Workgroup: Students Will Be Technologically Literate

Facilitator:
Patti Z. Barkin
Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC)
Eugene, OR

Goals:

- To increase awareness of research, state-of-the-art practices and information resources about the President's initiative.
- Be aware of TA&D activities and initiatives in this area.
- Have opportunities to explore possibilities for developing new, future, individual, and/or collaborative TA&D projects.

President's and Secretary's Priority:

Every classroom will be connected to the Internet by the year 2000, and all students will be technologically literate.

Janelle Leonard, USED Office of Educational Technology, presented national issues and initiatives to meet this priority. They are located at the end of this section.

Center/project/agency *successes*
In order to be aware of the strengths of the various organizations represented, each participant was asked "What technology at your office have you had the most fun/success with?"

- Regional Educational Technology Consortia (RTECs)

  1) teleconferencing 13 states video re: professional development;
  2) Cable television broadcast - training tapes
  - best practices

- National Early Childhood Technical Assistance System (NECTAS)

  Listserves for SEA 1) Infant/toddler coordinators and 2) Preschool

  Circle of Inclusion — preschool project — web-based training on model (NECTAS, RTEC, University of Kansas)

- Elementary and Middle Schools Technical Assistance Center (EMSTAC)

Needs assessment
R&D might explore technologies
EDC ++
Air-Tech Project (Deaf SS literacy)
Use of multimedia, hyper-text, captioning
Technology for Students with Disabilities: a Decision-Maker's Resource Guide
website: http://www.nsba.orig/itte

- Parents Engaged in Education Reform (PEER) Project

Assistive Technology for Parents from PLUK
"Parent Time" (website for parents) Federation
website: www.fcsn.org can link to other centers

- Office of Education Technology (OET)

Content and professional development

- National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (NCPSE)

Listserves for:
1) recruitment
2) educators with disabilities

Databases:
1) professional preparation listing of IHEs
2) financing education
3) literature reviews

- Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)

Wiggle Works: What do teachers need to know NSF project: captioning system
Universal Design Web — "Bobby" checks URL for accessibility
Ultimate Reader access to text and websites
website: www.cast.org

- National Center for Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR)
To better inform researchers (300 grantees on accessibility of websites, content, copyrights)
Through surveys (on how people get information, use of web)
Through www connect researchers (50 Research and Technology centers) Rehab engineering, Technical transfer

website: www.ncddr.org

- Education Development Center (EDC)
- Center to Link Urban Schools (Link US): two school districts linking on information and technology and *students* with disabilities National Resource Bank
- National Center to Improve Practice (NCIP): Online professional development opportunities
- DC Public Schools

Power Point presentations
Co-writer word processor
find technology to help implement the goals of the IEP
(10) computer distribution to parents with training on intelli-tools

Regional Resource and Federal Centers (RRFC)
e-mail
Web-based
TA via the web

Initiatives for Possible Future Individual or Collaborative Activities

- Get computers and technical support to families.
- Increased collaboration.
  What is available, how to disseminate,
  e.g. information specialists using emerging technologies.
- Top down/bottom up.
- RRCs with SEAs — Get to the "Tech. Table."
  inform Administrators about the resources this group disseminates
- How to disseminate to states and local communities.
- RTEC — videos of projects.
  Disseminate to administrators.
- More local level conferences on technology.
- Potential of community resources.

- Continue dialogue (listserv?) — relay research (NCDDR).
- Use web to present information.
- IASA posters — put technology information here.
  We should have better representation at IASA.
- Identify support that special education teachers need — provide OET with information.
- Use technology to deliver.
- Connect with SEA, with RTEC.
- SEAs with NCPSE in development of SIP.
- Establish listserv with members of this group topics: universal access, systemic models for dissemination, better information exchange.

The group adjourned with the understanding that the dialogue would continue via email and/or audio-conferences. Participants expressed satisfaction in learning about the other TA&D projects represented. Individual and group linkages were made. The information from USDOE OET was very informative.

Workgroup: Talented, Dedicated, and Well-Prepared Teacher in Every Classroom

Facilitator:
Caroline Moore
Western Regional Resource Center (WRRC)
Eugene, OR

The workshop concerning President Clinton's call for a "talented, dedicated, and well-prepared teacher in every classroom" began with considerations for a new vision of staff development. Results-driven education, systems thinking, and constructivism are the underpinnings for a new way of thinking about professional development.

Four presenters gave overviews of the aspect of the president's initiative that they were directly involved in. As these presentations were in depth and gave workshop participants an opportunity to ask questions of people who were directly involved in creating and implementing this initiative, the workgroup participants used the time to educate themselves rather than to generate issues of concern. The large session was followed by small group discussions about professional development and recommendations to the TA&D Network. Mary Jean LeTendre (Title I); Larry

Wexler, OSEP; Karl Murray, NASDSE; and Joanne Manning, MARE Lab discussed their perspectives on professional development with workgroup participants and one another.

Comprehensive School Reform
Mary Jean Le Tendre
Director, Title I
US Department of Education
Washington, DC

Professional development is critical in order to make IDEA 97 work. It is essential to understand the issue is about helping *all* children reach their potential. While there is no set aside for professional development in the legislation, it is a plan that builds on linking Title I and Title II.

The accountability system must ask: How much adequate yearly progress do the states expect students to make? Le Tendre held up the approval for 26 states because they were not taking certain kids into the assessment process. Our standards cannot be lowered, they must be improved.

Professional development also must take into consideration the issues of profound loss of cumulative learning in the summer for disadvantaged kids. To address this there must be a move towards such strategies as year-round school and intercession sessions, four-day weeks with longer days, arrangements with non-traditional settings, and partners to solve some of the logistics problems.

The Standards and Reform Act has created a level playing field. Congress is saying that what it wants is research-based strategies and approaches. Le Tendre then reviewed all of the aspects of Title I with the other group members.

State Improvement Grants
Larry Wexler
Office of Special Education Programs
Washington, DC

While it is often difficult to take grant money and get a university to change the curricula within professional development, a State Improvement Grant can be used on the ground, for instance, to help a special education teacher take a 13-week course in the English curriculum in General Education. In essence, there is no restriction on the creativity that these grants can use to support the improvement of teachers. Every state will get a grant within the next three years and we expect 75 percent are expected to be used on professional development. It will be possible to co-mingle school-wide money, linking SIGs to CSPD. Congress considers that the SEAs are in the best position to improve personnel preparation. The primary difference here is the fundamental shift of personnel preparation driven by needs assessment. Collaboration is also crucial; the

grant requires that states form partnerships. One way for constituents to get the kind of changes they want is for them to get a seat at the table as the grants are written. There also should be a system developed within the state to improve personnel development.

Mary Jean Le Tendre: Although there have been changes at the federal level, often there has been no change in behavior of the people who need to change — principals and school superintendents. I would like this group to help us with some strategies to do this. At the district level the enemy becomes the people who like their turf and want to keep things as they are. We need to reach them to really make changes and I welcome your suggestions.

Caroline Moore indicated that the WRRC ongoing workgroup has a teleconference every six weeks and invited participants to be a part of that continuing dialogue.

SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUP EVALUATION SESSIONS

Opportunities to collaborate were a big positive this year — better than other years — the pacing of the conference allowed us to collaborate better. — Participant

The closing session was intended to evaluate the TA&D conference. This evaluation session was structured as a "guided conversation" to enable conference participants to focus on the topics and issues presented over the three days and to provide the conference planning committee with their reflections, insights, and recommendations. Groups were formed and divided among five tables in order to record and capture the discussion that serves as the basis for this summary.

General Observations

On the whole, participants mentioned that the combination of plenary sessions and interactive workshops worked well, and the "pacing" of the conference allowed for a lot of collaboration and learning. In particular, they observed that it was very beneficial to have greater representation from the broader education world beyond OSEP as it enriched the dialogue.

Conference Objective #1: Conference participants will have an opportunity to increase their knowledge in various topical areas related to TA&D.

Participants indicated that this meeting left them feeling more up-to-date in their field. The areas of knowledge that were cited as being the high point were those of applied technology, and the OSEP and GPRA indicators. There was high praise for having an opportunity to learn directly from people who were responsible for plans and programs.

There was a request for more information on early childhood issues in accountability.

Conference Objective #2: Conference participants will have an opportunity to exchange information, problem solve, and pursue possible collaborative activities with other TA&D colleagues.

Participants indicated that they could see ongoing collaborative follow-up since the last conference. Clearly articulated during the evaluation was the sense of collaboration and collegiality, but there was continued thought given as to how to collaborate better next time. The reason most frequently cited was that, with such a full agenda and no particular structured networking process, it was very difficult to get to know what projects and activities people were working on.

Suggestions for improving networking and getting to know what participants were doing:

- Go on a camping trip as a group.

- Hold a reception structured for people to bring catalogues, etc about their projects.
- Increase dialoguing between conferences.
- Have more lunches with one another to promote the TA&D network.
- Combine AED lab and computers displaying websites with a reception, where people can stop and take a look at the sites and what's happening.

Conference Objective #3: Conference participants will have an opportunity to become familiar with the resources/services/expertise of other U.S. Department of Education TA&D projects.

There was very positive response to this objective. Department level activities to tie things together were rated as very good first steps to becoming familiar with outside projects. The description of the big picture and the ED website spurred participants to comment that they had resources they could take back home with them. The same was true of understanding the relations between title programs and special education. Others cited learning directly from people involved in these projects helped them understand these projects much better.

Conference Objective #4: Conference participants will have an opportunity to become a partner and contributor to the President's Education Initiatives in his *Call to Action* and the Secretary of Education's *Seven Priorities*.

There was considerable agreement that this was a good beginning towards understanding as well as discussing the initiatives but several people mentioned that they had not really connected the work group discussions with the president's initiatives. Participants mentioned how important it was that Department of Education representatives kicked off the discussion about the initiatives. Many people felt that having direct access to people who created the initiatives and who are responsible for implementing them really helped them learn. Most participants saw this as the beginning of a process, that is, a few hours in a workgroup couldn't possibly get them to the stage of being able to accomplish the initiatives.

Recommendations:

The most frequently mentioned recommendations can be summed up as:

- Find ways to better understand what colleagues in TA&D do in their projects.
- We need representative diversity: minorities, different disabilities, and parents of children with special needs in the room with us.

Other isolated suggestions:

- Make sure there are parents present for workgroup discussion.

- Next year continue with the topic of school reform.
- Hold a newcomer's orientation.
- Make the logistics of the meeting clear on the invitation (who, what, when, where).
- Let's tell Congress what we've done and who we are (need publicity for discretionary programs).
- Give feedback to Riley about including us with broader groups.
- Make sure we voice to the OSEP task force our opinions about technical assistance.
- Move the workgroup to the first day.
- Clarify who should be in which sessions. The tech sessions are too much of a mix of naive users and people with extensive backgrounds.

OSEP'S 8TH ANNUAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND DISSEMINATION CONFERENCE

Agenda

THEME:

Promoting and Supporting Change through Training and Network Development

PURPOSES:

Conference participants will have an opportunity to:

1. increase their knowledge in various topical areas related to TA & D;
2. exchange information, problem-solve, and pursue possible collaborative activities with other TA & D colleagues;
3. become familiar with the resources and services/expertise of other U.S. Department of Education TA & D projects; and
4. become a partner and contributor to the President's Education Initiatives in his "Call to Action" and the Secretary of Education's "Seven Priorities"

Sunday, March 1, 1998

9:00-10:00	**Registration**	New Hampshire Foyer
10:00-4:00	**Optional Pre-Conference Workshop:** **Strategic Planning- Managing the Implementation Process** *Marilyn Crocker*	City Centre One

Monday, March 2, 1998

8:00-9:00	**Registration, Continental Breakfast**	New Hampshire Foyer
9:00-9:20	**Greetings and Introductions** **Welcome:** *Carol Valdivieso* **Conference Overview:** *Pat Trohanis*	New Hampshire One and Two
9:20-10:15	**Plenary Introduction:** *Gary Rutkin* **Plenary: "Goal-Driven Management"** *James Ball*	
10:15-10:45	**Refreshment Break**	New Hampshire Foyer

10:45-12:15	**Concurrent Sessions** **1. Discerning the Key Underlying Obstacles (Internal and External) in Strategic Planning** *Marilyn Crocker*	City Centre Ballroom
	2. Achieving Goals and Results through "Goal-Driven Management" *James Ball*	New Hampshire One and Two
12:15- 1:45	**Lunch (on your own)**	
1:45-2:45	**Updates on OSEP National Goals and Performance Indicators** *Ellen Schiller, Ruth Ryder, OSEP*	New Hampshire One and Two
2:45-3:00	**Break**	New Hampshire Foyer
3:00-5:00	**Interview Design Process** *Jane Hange, Beth Dankert Sattes-AEL*	City Centre One and Two
5:15-7:15	**Reception and Poster Session**	New Hampshire One and Two

Tuesday, March 3, 19987

7:30-8:30	**Continental Breakfast and Informal Chat Areas** This is an opportunity for participants to network and information. Chat areas include: *Urban Issues, led by Caroline Moore of the WRRC; Informational conversation about DB-LINK Clearinghouse with John Reiman*	New Hampshire Foyer
8:30-9:45	**Plenary Introductions**: *Michele Rovins* **Plenary: Updates on National Information Resources** *Keith Stubbs-ED, Isa Joseph-SARRC*	New Hampshire One and Two
9:45-10:15	**Refreshment Break**	New Hampshire Foyer
10:15-12:15	**Concurrent Topical Sessions (choose one)** **1. Technology Demonstration at the National Demonstration Lab-** *Leslie Hazle, AED*	1255 23rd Street
	2. Electronic Reporting Systems on TA & D Activities *Paula Seidman-AED/NTA*	Monticello

3. **Roundtable discussion on** — New Hampshire One and Two
"Hot Topics" Research to Practice in:
a) **General Curriculum** *(Sharon Healy, Montgomery County Public Schools)*
b) **Assessments and Outcomes** *(Judy Elliott, NCEO)*
c) **Issues in Reform** *(Don Dailey, NASBE)*

4. **Facilitated conversations: GPRA and the new OSEP Guidelines for IDEA Implementation** — Mt. Vernon
(Michael Kane, AIR)

12:30-2:15 **OSEP Luncheon** — City Centre Ballroom
Speaker Introduction: *Carol Valdivieso*
Guest Speaker: *Tom Hehir, OSEP Director*

2:15-2:30 **Preview of Wednesday Workgroup Activities:** *Pat Trohanis*

2:45-4:45 **Concurrent Topical Sessions (choose one)**

1) **Principles of On-Line Course Design and Facilitation** — Mt. Vernon
(Judy Zorfass, Arlene Remz, EDC)

2) **Electronic Reporting Systems on TA & D Activities** — Monticello
(Paula Seidman, NTA/AED)

3) **Roundtable discussion on** — New Hampshire One and Two
"Hot Topics" Research to Practice in :
a) **Autism** *(Joicey Hurth, Roxane Kaufman, NEC*TAS)*
b) **Positive Approaches to School-Wide Behavior**
(David Osher , Anthony Sims, Mary Quinn AIR)
c) **Parent/Family/Community Involvement**
(Sharman Davis Jamison -Parent Alliance)

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

7:30-8:30 **Continental Breakfast** — New Hampshire Foyer

8:30-11:30 **Workgroup Activities**

1. **Talented, Dedicated and Well-Prepared Teacher in Every Classroom**(e.g., personnel development; in-service education; pre-service; CSPD; SIP/SIG; state TA systems) — New Hampshire Three

2. **Challenging Standards of Achievement and Accountability** (e.g., standards and assessment; state performance goals and indicators) — Mt. Vernon

3. **Students will be Technologically Literate** (e.g., ways to enhance child/youth/learning; adult education; etc.) — City Centre One

4. **Safe, Drug Free, Disciplined Schools** (e.g., discipline, behavior manifestation and plans; early prevention and positive intervention strategies); Monticello

11:45-12:30 · **Facilitated evaluation wrap-up** New Hampshire Three

Office of Special Education Program's
8th Annual Technical Assistance and
Dissemination Conference

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OSEP's Eighth Annual
Technical Assistance and Dissemination Conference

Promoting and Supporting Change Through Training and Network Development

Jenelle V. Leonard
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Technology
March 4, 1998

OSEP's Eighth Annual
Technical Assistance and Dissemination Conference

Presentation Outline

1. National Technology Literacy Challenge Goals
2. Technology Literacy Challenge Fund
3. Technology Innovation Challenge Grants
4. Telecommunications Act - E-Rate
5. New Teacher Training Initiatives -FY 1999
6. Other Technology Initiatives - FY 1999

President Clinton's Vision

President Clinton
State of the Union
January 23, 1996

"In our schools, every classroom in America must be connected to the information superhighway with computers and good software and well-trained teachers..."

Toward the 21st Century
The National Technology Goals

- Every classroom connected to the information superhighway
- Modern multimedia computers in every classroom
- Teacher training and support to use the technology
- Effective software & on-line learning resources in every curriculum

Toward the 21st Century
Technology Literacy Challenge

February 15, 1996

President Clinton and Secretary Richard Riley proposed a five-year, $2 billion fund that would support grassroots efforts at the state and local level to put the future at the fingertips of every child by the dawn of the new century.

Toward the 21st Century
Technology Literacy Challenge Fund

- Support efforts to reach four National Technology Goals.
- States required to submit Technology Plan.
- State administered TLCF program.
- TLCF funds are competed at the local school level.
- TLCF funds are targeted for LEAs with highest poverty and greatest need for access to technology.

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Toward the 21st Century Technology Literacy Challenge Fund

$2 billion over 5 years
- FY 1997: $200 million
- FY 1998: $425 million
- FY 1999: $475 million (requested)

Toward the 21st Century Technology Learning Challenge

A "Technology Learning Challenge" was initiated in 1995 by the Administration.

Communities were challenged to form partnerships of local schools districts, colleges, universities and private businesses to develop creative ways to use technology for learning.

Toward the 21st Century Technology Innovation Challenge Grants

- 3rd round Technology Challenge Grants - $57M in FY1997; $75M in FY1998; $106 million requested for FY1999
- 19 new grants awarded September 1997
- 62 projects in 33 States
- 28 urban and 15 rural projects
- 3 million students and their teachers
- 850 partners including 215 business firms

Technology Innovation Challenge Grants FY 1998

- $30 million new competitive grants.
- Priority will be on teacher preparation and professional development.
- Application package will be available by March 31, 1998.
- Applications will be due to the Department May 29, 1998.
- The awards will be made by September 30, 1998.

Technology Innovation Challenge Grants FY 1998

- Applications must be submitted by a local education agency (LEA) on behalf of a consortium.
- Consortia include school district(s), state educational agency, university, businesses, academic content experts, and other entities.
- Projects must ensure ongoing, sustainable professional development for teachers and administrators.

Technology Innovation Challenge Grants FY 1998

- Guidelines and the Federal Register notices will be available on the Department's Web site at:
  http://www.ed.gov/Technology/challenge/index.html
- Telephone: 1-800-USA LEARN (1-800-872-5327).
- FAX requests to: Sharon Morgan at (202) 208-4042

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Telecommunications Act of 1996
E-Rate - Affordable Access
May 7, 1997

1. The FCC voted unanimously to provide schools and libraries discounts on telecommunications services.
2. Deep discounts on a sliding scale for schools and libraries. Discounts range from 20–90%.
3. The E-rate will ensure that no school or library is left behind in the information age.

Telecommunications Act of 1996
E-Rate

1. Applies to all telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections.
2. Schools and Libraries Corporation is responsible for receiving applications and committing funds under the universal service provisions.
3. Up to $2.25 billion (Universal Service Fund) annually.
4. Website: http://www.slcfund.org

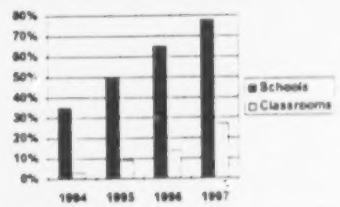
E-Rate
Next Steps

- Develop or update Technology Plan.
- Budget for implementation.
- Submit both the 470 and 471 application forms by April 14, 1998.
- State Departments of Education and Regional Technology Consortia (R*TEC) provide technical assistance for completing applications.
- Over 20,000 applications have been received.

Assessing School Connectivity
Internet Access in Public Schools, NCES, March 1998

1. 78% of all public schools are connected to the Internet. The number has more than doubled since 1994.
2. 27% of all instructional rooms have Internet access. Only 3% of all instructional rooms had access in 1994.
3. The survey shows the nation's steady progress toward connecting every classroom to the information superhighway by the year 2000.

Internet Connectivity



NCES survey, *Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Schools, K-12*

New Technology Training for Teachers Initiatives FY 1999

Goals

1. All new teachers entering the workforce will be able to use technology effectively in the classroom.
2. At least one teacher in every school who can serve as a technology expert to help fellow teachers use technology in the classroom.

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New Technology Training for Teachers Initiatives FY 1999

1. Grants would support preservice education, faculty development, or a cooperative between K-12 and higher education.
2. Competitive grants available to consortia of states, colleges of education, school districts, private sector and others.
3. $75 million budget request for FY 1999.

Toward the 21st Century Technology Literacy Challenge Fund

- States will be encouraged to devote at least 30% to provide professional development for teachers.
- Goal is to work toward having at least one teacher in every school who can serve as a technology expert to help fellow teachers use technology in the classroom.
- Budget request for FY1999 is $475 million.

New Technology Initiatives FY 1999

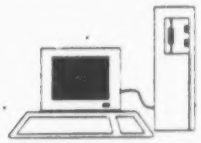
- **Community-based Technology Centers**
  - $10 million to establish computer learning centers in low-income communities
- **Education Research Initiative**
  - $75 million for researching educational benefits of technology

Computers for Learning

- Place computers in the classrooms.
- Designed to streamline the transfer of surplus Federal computer equipment to schools and non-profit organizations.
- Website - www.computers.fed.gov

Visit the Department of Education's Home Page

http://www.ed.gov/Technology



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The Government Performance and Results Act (PL 103-62)

Key Questions to be Answered in the Plan

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- **What "results" should a particular agency be held accountable for? What are their goals?**
- **How should each agency be trying to achieve their goals? (strategies)**
- **How should Congress evaluate the performance of a federal agency?**
- **What is the proper role for government? Who should be doing what?**

IDEA PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

Hatry's Model

IDEA (1997)

Inputs

Part C - Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Early intervention that is:
- statewide
- coordinated
- multidisciplinary
- interagency-based

Part B - Children and Youth with Disabilities

Special Education/ Related Services that:
- ensure FAPE
- ensure rights
- assists states

Part D - Tools to Improve Results

- Research and Innovation
- Personnel Preparation
- Technical Assistance
- Technology
- State Improvement
- Parent Training

Part D - Tools to Assess Results

- National Studies and Evaluations

Appropriations

Employees

Program Outputs

OSEP Program Outputs
- Regulations
- Monitoring Reports
- Corrective Action Plans
- Compliance Agreements
- Grant Awards
- Annual Plans and Reports
- Customer Service

Outcomes

Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Goal #1: Family and child outcomes are enhanced by early intervention services.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Goal #2: States provide a comprehensive system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Children and Youth with Disabilities

Goal #1: State and local educational agencies are engaged in program improvement to improve results for children and youth with disabilities.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Goal #2: Children and youth with disabilities have access to a high quality education.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Goal #3: Children and youth with disabilities meet challenging standards and are prepared for employment and independent living.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Tools to Improve Results

Goal #1: A comprehensive, systemic infrastructure that links to states, school systems, and families identifies, develops, and communicates best practices to improve results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.
- Intermediate Outcomes
- End Outcomes

Impact

Independent Productive Citizens

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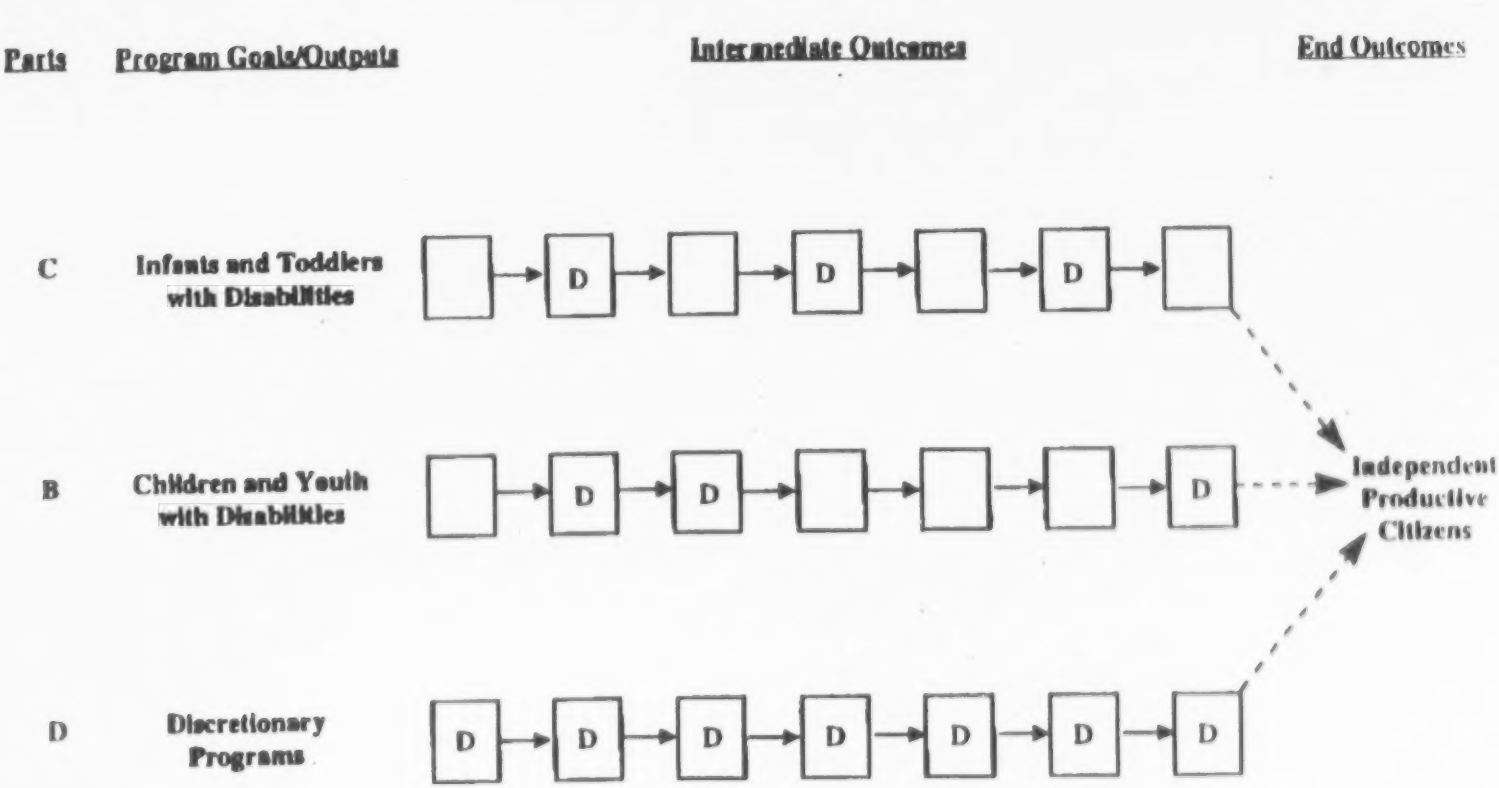
A Schematic of Program Logic Models to Integrate Formula and Discretionary Programs



Key: ***D = discretionary program support/stimulated activity.***

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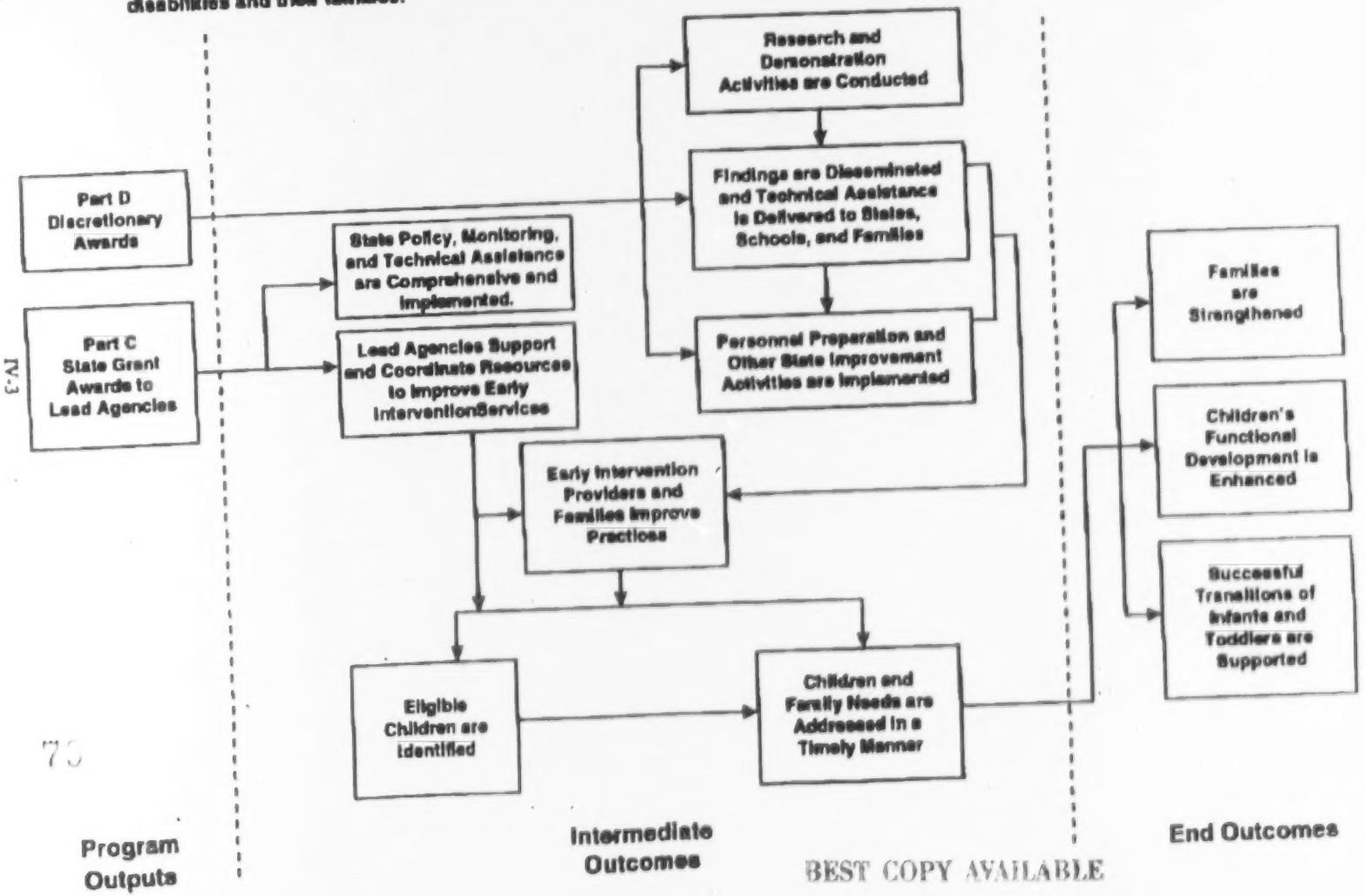
September 25, 1997

Draft Logic Model

IDEA Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities

Goal #1: Family and child outcomes are enhanced by early intervention services
Goal #2: States provide a comprehensive system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.


Research and Demonstration Activities are Conducted
Findings are Disseminated and Technical Assistance is Delivered to States, Schools, and Families
Personnel Preparation and Other State Improvement Activities are Implemented
Part D Discretionary Awards
State Policy, Monitoring, and Technical Assistance are Comprehensive and Implemented.
Part C State Grant Awards to Lead Agencies
Lead Agencies Support and Coordinate Resources to Improve Early InterventionServices
Early Intervention Providers and Families Improve Practices
Eligible Children are Identified
Children and Family Needs are Addressed in a Timely Manner
Families are Strengthened
Children's Functional Development is Enhanced
Successful Transitions of Infants and Toddlers are Supported
Program Outputs
Intermediate Outcomes
End Outcomes

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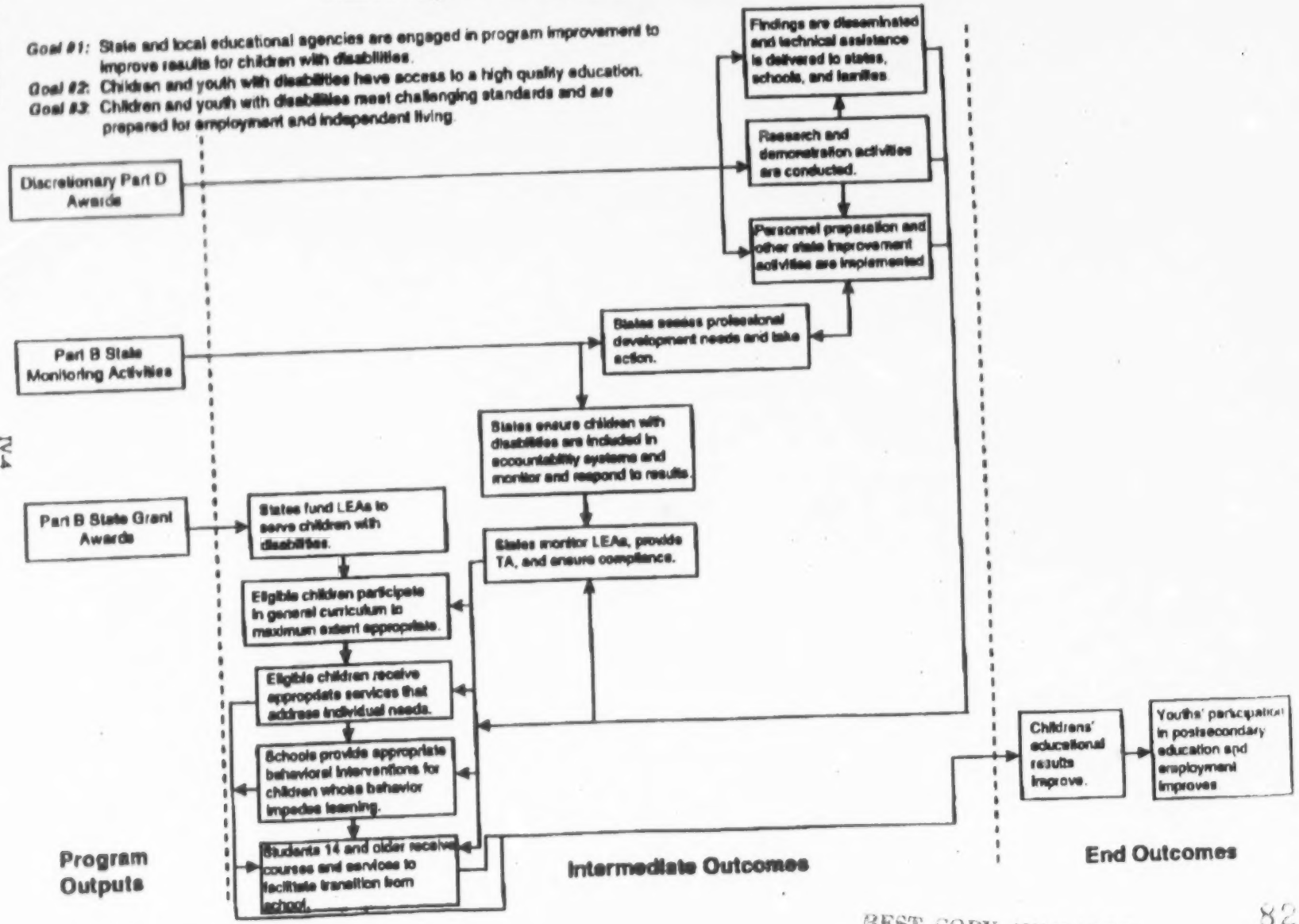
Draft Logic Model
IDEA Program for Children and Youth with Disabilities

September 25, 1997

Goal #1: State and local educational agencies are engaged in program improvement to improve results for children with disabilities.
Goal #2: Children and youth with disabilities have access to a high quality education.
Goal #3: Children and youth with disabilities meet challenging standards and are prepared for employment and independent living.


Findings are disseminated and technical assistance is delivered to states, schools, and families
Research and demonstration activities are conducted.
Personnel preparation and other state improvement activities are implemented
Discretionary Part D Awards
Part B State Monitoring Activities
States assess professional development needs and take action.
States ensure children with disabilities are included in accountability systems and monitor and respond to results.
Part B State Grant Awards
States fund LEAs to serve children with disabilities.
States monitor LEAs, provide TA, and ensure compliance.
Eligible children participate in general curriculum to maximum extent appropriate.
Eligible children receive appropriate services that address individual needs.
Schools provide appropriate behavioral interventions for children whose behavior impedes learning.
Students 14 and older receive courses and services to facilitate transition from school.
Childrens' educational results improve.
Youths' participation in postsecondary education and employment improves
Program Outputs
Intermediate Outcomes
End Outcomes

IV-4

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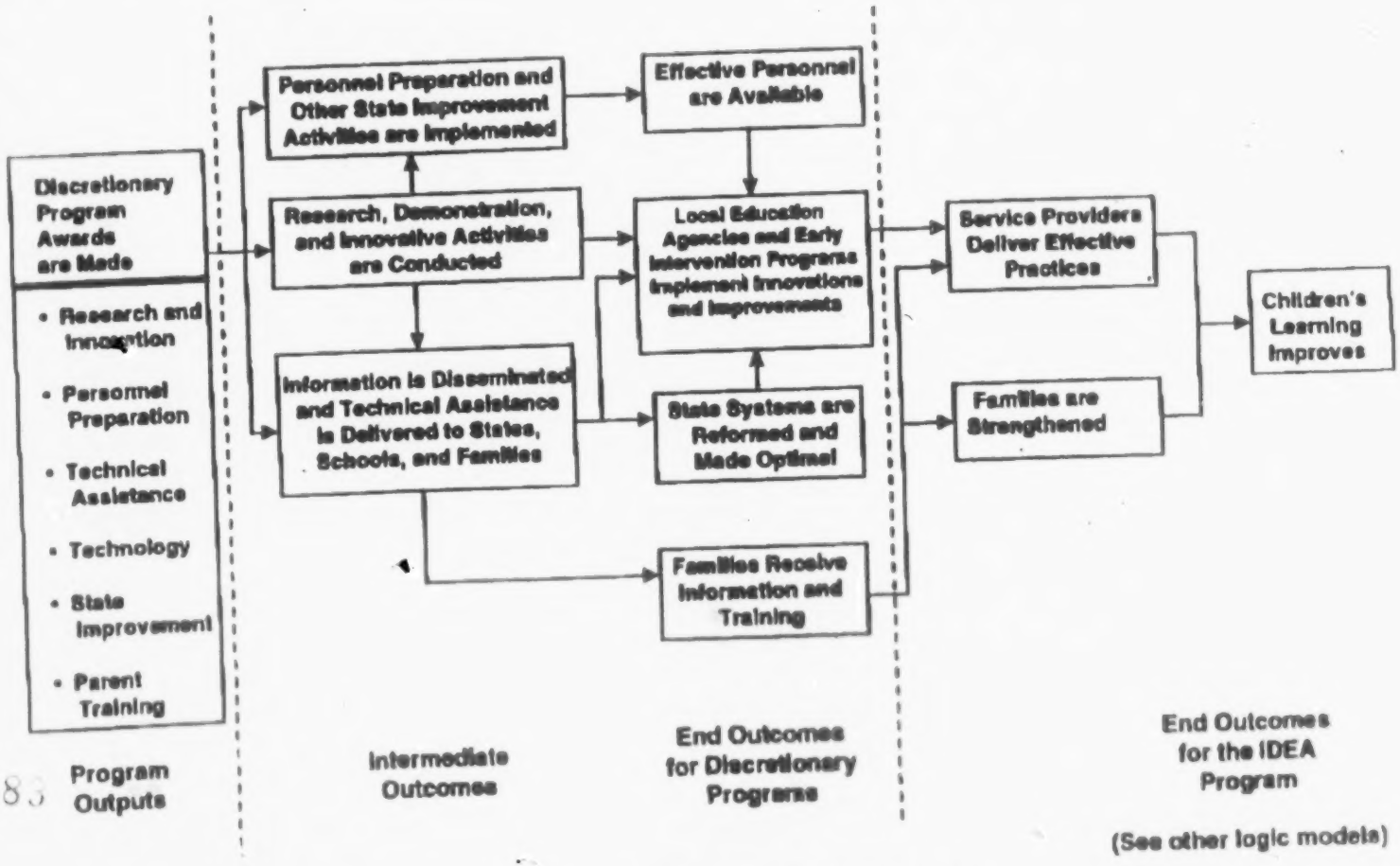
Draft Logic Model
IDEA Discretionary Programs

Goal #1: A comprehensive, systemic, infrastructure that links to states, school systems, and families identifies, develops, and communicates best practices to improve results for children with disabilities


Discretionary Program Awards are Made
• Research and Innovation
• Personnel Preparation
• Technical Assistance
• Technology
• State Improvement
• Parent Training
Program Outputs
Personnel Preparation and Other State Improvement Activities are Implemented
Research, Demonstration, and Innovative Activities are Conducted
Information is Disseminated and Technical Assistance is Delivered to States, Schools, and Families
Intermediate Outcomes
Effective Personnel are Available
Local Education Agencies and Early Intervention Programs Implement Innovations and Improvements
State Systems are Reformed and Made Optimal
Families Receive Information and Training
End Outcomes for Discretionary Programs
Service Providers Deliver Effective Practices
Families are Strengthened
Children's Learning Improves
End Outcomes for the IDEA Program
(See other logic models)

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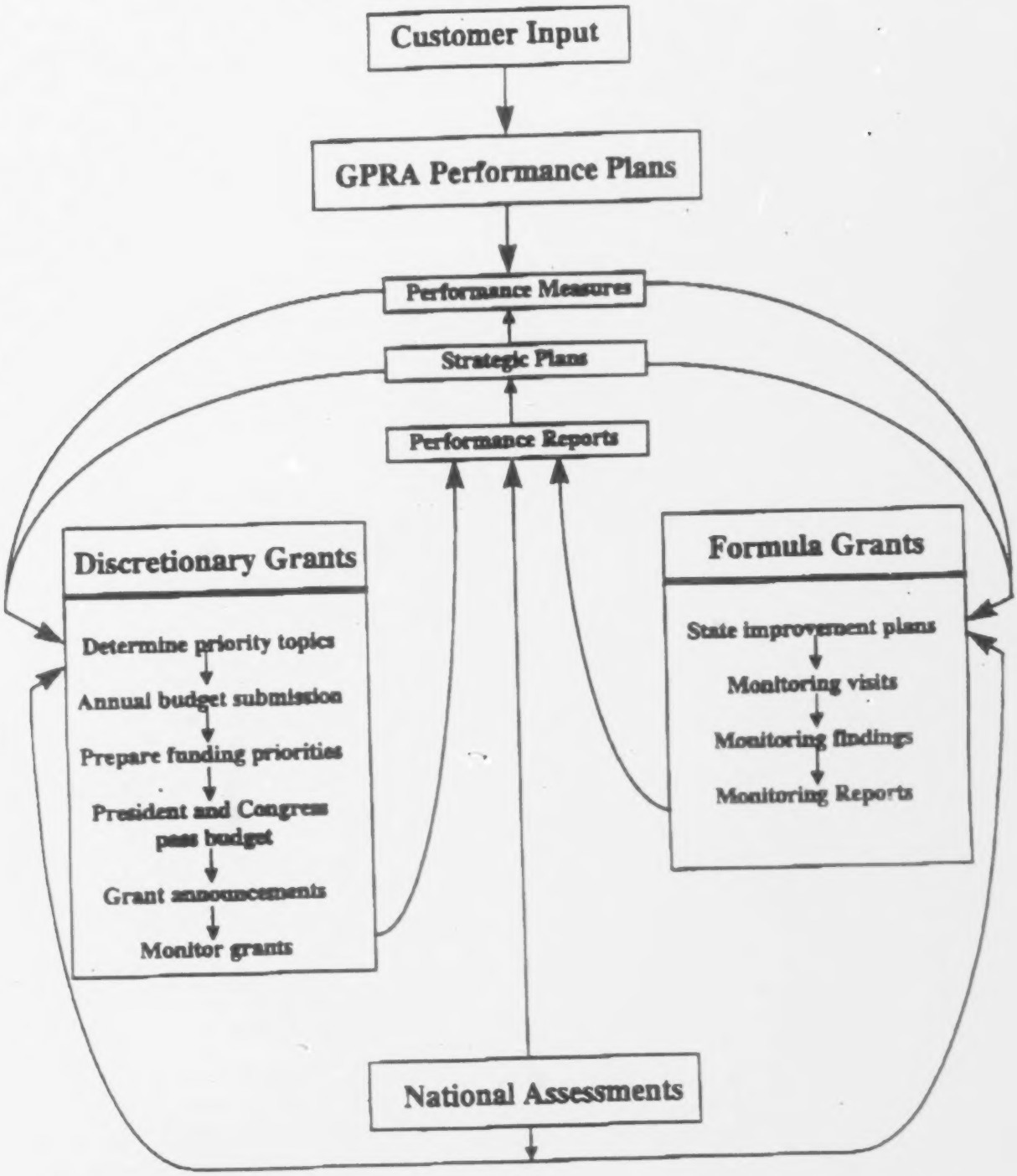
OSEP GPRA Planning

Linkages Across Planning Activities and Outcomes



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Special Education Discretionary Program – January 7,1998			
Goal: **Link best practices to States, school systems, and families to improve results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.**			
Objectives	**Indicators**	**Source and Next Update**	**Strategies**
1. **Ensure an adequate supply of highly-qualified personnel.**	1.1 **Supply of qualified personnel.** An increasing number of States meet their identified needs for qualified personnel.	1.1 CSPD / State Improvement reports; State Improvement grant applications, beginning in FY 1998	• Develop model computer program for tracking personnel system/demand and make available to all States. • Identify research validated effective practices. • Add grant selection criteria that promote the use of research-validated effective program content and pedagogy. • Establish cooperative agreement to link research validated practices to personnel preparation and training programs. • Require State improvement grant applications to include current data on regular and special education personnel employed, certification status, and training received. • Support preparation programs for personnel to work with both children with low-incidence and high-incidence disabilities to ensure an adequate supply of highly qualified personnel. • Promote innovative solutions to address the needs for an adequate supply of highly-qualified personnel.
	1.2 **Research-validated effective practices.** An increasing percentage of training programs incorporate research-validated practices in program curricula.	1.2 Review of funded awards and institutional practices, beginning in FY 1999	
	1.3 **Personnel employed with certification.** An increasing percentage of special education teachers and related services personnel are certified appropriately.	1.3 NCES Schools and Staffing Survey, FY 2000.	
	1.4 **Special education training for regular education teachers.** An increasing percentage of regular education teachers and community service providers receive preservice and inservice training in special education and developmentally appropriate practices.	1.4 NCES Schools and Staffing Survey, FY 2000	
	1.5 **Effective personnel.** An increasing percentage of special and regular education teachers and early intervention personnel have the knowledge and skills to improve educational results for children with disabilities.	1.5 Surveys of personnel's sense of self-efficacy, surveys of teachers, parents, and students regarding personnel's knowledge and skills.	

Special Education Discretionary Program – January 7,1998			
Goal: Link best practices to States, school systems, and families to improve results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.			
Objectives	**Indicators**	**Source and Next Update**	**Strategies**
2. Rigorous research, development, demonstration, and innovation responds to critical needs and advances knowledge to improve results for children with disabilities.	2.1 **Respond to knowledge gaps.** An increasing percentage of IDEA-supported research and demonstration products, including technology products, respond directly to identified needs of SEAs, LEAs, and direct service providers. 2.2 **Ensuring quality.** An increasing percentage of projects, including technology projects, use rigorous research and evaluation methods. 2.3a* **Advance knowledge use.** An increasing percentage of final research reports documenting activities to advance the use of the knowledge produced are reported. 2.3b* **Increasing Use.** An increasing percentage of customers report that IDEA-supported research products have been incorporated into current practices and the policy-making process. 2.3c* **Advance knowledge use**. An increasing percentage of IDEA-supported research is assessed as useful by TA providers and practitioners in advancing their work in improving results for children with disabilities. **see attached narratives*	2.1 Survey of SEAs, LEAs, and others as part of the comprehensive planning process. 2.2 Standing panel's review of grant applications and recommendations for increasing rigor of applications. 2.3a Review and summary of final reports. 2.3b Customer surveys (including TA, information, and direct service providers); review of demonstration project applications. 2.3c Review and summary of final reports; Customer surveys (including TA, information, and direct service providers); review of demonstration project applications.	• Determine the knowledge / information needs of SEAs, LEAs, and other service providers and incorporate these needs into Department priorities • Fund demonstration projects to apply and validate research findings • Incorporate selection criteria in grant applications that promote an emphasis on useability of research knowledge • Provide TA, information, and support to grantees and potential consumers of research information regarding strategies (e.g., improved credibility, visibility, and communicability of research products) to enhance the use of research • Use the annual meeting of OSEP-supported researchers to analyze recent advances and continuing gaps in knowledge to respond to stakeholder needs • Fund research syntheses as a means to identify best practices • Encourage IDEA-supported researchers to submit findings and products to OERI expert panels • Increase awareness of researchers supported by IDEA research

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Special Education Discretionary Program – January 7,1998			
Goal: Link best practices to States, school systems, and families to improve results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.			
Objectives	**Indicators**	**Source and Next Update**	**Strategies**
3. Technical Assistance (TA) and information will be coordinated and accessible to parents, teachers, administrators, early intervention personnel, related personnel, and transition personnel and will result in improved practices.	**3.1 Customer satisfaction.** An increasing percentage of customers receive TA and information and report satisfaction with the services received.	3.1 Surveys of recipients and potential recipients of TA and information.	• Determine the TA and information needs of SEAs, LEAs, and other customers and incorporate these needs into Department priorities. • Incorporate conditions into grant announcements that ensure TA and knowledge competencies and promote emphasis on effective practices in curriculum policies and services. • Assess alternative TA and dissemination approaches and identify effective strategies that respond to customer needs. • Provide training to TA providers and disseminators to improve their practices. • Assess existing models of TA and information to identify effective strategies for increasing research use. • Provide TA and training to OSEP network of TA providers on effective strategies for increasing the use of research. • Develop coordinated, collaborative strategies with other ED-funded providers of TA and information.
	3.2 Improving practices. An increasing percentage of customers use TA and information to improve practices.	3.2 Surveys of TA and information recipients, including SEAs, LEAs, and other service providers.	
	3.3 Respond to information needs. An increasing number of TA and information materials respond to critical needs.	3.3 Surveys to document content of TA activities.	
	3.4 Use effective practices. An increasing number of TA and information products and events promote effective practices in curricula, policies, and services and are based on validated research.	3.4 Surveys to document content of TA activities.	

Special Education Discretionary Program – January 7,1998			
Goal: Link best practices to States, school systems, and families to improve results for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.			
Objectives	**Indicators**	**Source and Next Update**	**Strategies**
4. Local education agencies and early intervention programs implement program innovations and improvements.	4.1 **LEAs and community-based programs implement innovation and improvement efforts.** An increasing percentage of LEAs and community-based programs indicate implementation of innovations, validated practices, and program improvement efforts for improving results of children with disabilities.	4.1 Surveys of LEAs and community-based programs on the type of innovations, including supporting evidence.	• Assess alternative TA approaches and identify effective strategies that respond to LEAs' and community-based providers' needs. • Provide TA and training on models and strategies for effective practices to OSEP network of TA providers.
5. **State systems of education and early intervention for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities are reformed and improved.**	5.1 **Development of accountability systems.** Increase number of states with accountability systems in place to track the progress of infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities. 5.2 **Inclusion in statewide assessments.** All students with disabilities are included in statewide assessment systems. 5.3 **State Improvement Grants.** By 1999, all States have submitted a competitive application for the State Improvement Grant program.	5.1 Review of State Improvement Plans, beginning FY 1998 5.2 Review of State Improvement Plans. 5.3 Review of State Improvement Plans.	• Use annual OSEP leadership meetings to showcase innovative and reformed State practices. • Provide TA and information to States in developing and implementing their State improvement plans. • Promote partnerships among State and local agencies and organizations to ensure that the needs of children with disabilities and their families are met. • Conduct research on accommodations that allow children with disabilities to participate in assessments and on developing alternative assessments. • Provide TA and information on accommodations and alternative assessments.

6. Families receive the information and training that they need to increase their participation in their child's education.	**6.1 Families receiving information and training.** An increasing number of families report satisfaction with the information and training they receive about rights, protections, effective practices, and related issues.	6.1 Surveys of families' satisfaction with information services.	• Promote coordination among providers of TA and information, both OSEP-supported and other Department providers.

Report from the Collaborative and Innovative Uses of Technologies Workgroup

Patti Barkin, WRRC
Joan Danaher, NECTAS

During the year since the Seventh Annual Technical Assistance and Dissemination Conference held in Washington, DC, March 3-5, 1997, the group, facilitated by Patti Zembrosky Barkin, WRRC, and Arlene Remz, NCIP, pursued the action steps generated at that meeting. The first was a recommendation that all TA and D Network projects' Web sites meet universal access standards. The second was a plan to collaborate on a series of abstracts on various information technologies that we could use in our work, drawing upon the varied experiences of members of the group. We created an electronic mailing list of workgroup participants for the purpose of developing the abstracts.

The participants in the workgroup were: Lin Ballard, NASDSE; Jean Wolman, CSEF; Mike Yared, NICHY; Pam Updike, MSRRC; Barb Marshall, GLARRC; Ray Minor, OSEP; and Joan Danaher, NECTAS.

The following abstracts were developed:

Technology Medium: Audio conferencing
Purpose: To conduct business over the telephone with groups of people.

Advantages of audio conferencing:
Conferences and meetings can be conducted with participants never having to leave their office. The cost of the meeting is that of a long distance phone call plus set-up charges with a teleconference service (e.g. Wisline). Regular agendas and materials should be mailed, emailed or faxed to participants in preparation for the teleconference just as for a face-to-face conference or meeting. Guest speakers can be arranged and briefed on the teleconference protocol including pausing for questions at regular intervals. A narrated web tour could be conducted with participants utilizing a speakerphone while accessing the internet at their computers. A facilitator is necessary on all teleconferences to open the meeting with introductions and to remind participants to identify themselves each time that they speak. The facilitator also plays the role of timekeeper. Another person should be assigned the role of taking notes. If participants are on email, minutes can be sent immediately following the teleconference.

Disadvantages of audio conferencing:
The personal interactions are verbal only. It is difficult to conduct such a meeting with persons with hearing impairments or with speech difficulties.

Technology Medium: Video conferencing

Purpose: To provide experiences and interaction between individuals in remote locations by means of audio and video communication.

Advantages of video conferencing:

Video conferencing eliminates the cost and inconvenience associated with traveling to sites to provide information and interaction. Meetings may be arranged anytime throughout the year. Satellite conferencing adds the capability of promoting world wide, high quality real-time communications for large groups of individuals. In addition, satellite conferencing can dramatically reduce the costs of professional development for remotely located groups when a single speaker can address them from a distance.

Disadvantages of video conferencing:
The cost is still quite high and availability varies across communities. Video conferencing is available through community colleges, universities or commercial establishments like Kinkos. For multiple or remotely located sites, this medium can prove quite cost effective.

Technology Medium: Ordering On-line

Purpose: To order publications via the internet.

Advantages of on-line ordering: Many web sites include forms for ordering publications which users can fill out and send online, or print out and fax or mail. This new convenience allows for quick access to materials without the need for telephone or mailing in orders. Typically, our Web sites are on non-secure servers. This has not been an impediment to online ordering as people now believe that sending a VISA number over the Internet poses no greater risk than charging a meal in a restaurant. One can tell if a Web site is on a secure server by looking for the padlock or key in the lower left corner of the screen. If the key appears to be broken or the padlock is in an unlocked position, the server is not secure. The NCIP Web site provides a good example of options for online ordering and the printing out of a form for later mailing or faxing. There is a totaling feature for orders. See:
http://www.edc.org/FSC/NCIP/Video_OrderForm.html
http://www.edc.org/FSC/NCIP/Video_online_form.html

For organizations that may be more concerned about security or not have the expertise to develop the forms and features required, there are online enterprises to assist. For a very reasonable fee, these providers route your business through their secure server and provide all of the forms and features you need for Internet commerce. The names of two of these services are Americart and ShopCart. Costs are as low as $17 per month or $199 per year. See:
http://www.cartserver.com/americart/
http://www.shopcart.com/home/files/index.htm

Disadvantages of on-line ordering: If a person or organization does not have access to the internet or does not have or choose to use a credit card, then this form of ordering is not a convenience.

Technology Medium: Web-based Searchable Databases

Purpose:
To provide access to databases via the World Wide Web through your organization's Web pages.

Advantages for Web-based searchable databases:
-Provides clients and other users with access to important resources, such as a library or other information-rich database.
-Depending upon which software is being used for the database, the web environment allows a set-up that is simple and easy for the searcher to use. For example, a simple "search" button can be installed so users need not know Filemaker commands in order to perform a sophisticated search. See the Early Prevention of Violence Database on the GLARRC Web site for an example (http://www.csnp.ohio-state.edu/glarrc/VPDB.html).
-Provide this access 24 hours per day, 7 days per week in the WWW environment.

Disadvantages for Web-based searchable databases:
-Security issues must be considered, to ensure that the CGI scripts aren't written such that a Web surfer can access data that should be inaccessible to the general public. However, using a pre-scripted program such as WEB FM (rather than writing your own script) solves this problem.
-Need for in-house technical expertise to set up and run the CGI scripts and make correct linkages between Web server and database.
-Not everyone has Web access; how do you provide those users with the same information?
-Availability may be dependent on the performance of the individual user's Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Technology Medium: Listservs

Purpose: To allow for the exchange of print information over the Internet.

Advantages of using Listservs:
-To facilitate information sharing among a group of individuals with similar interests. A listserv is a mailing list wherein an e-mail message sent to the list is sent to all the subscribers to the listserv. Listservs have many options and variations such as default replies can be sent to only the originator of the message or to all of the subscribers. A list can be open or closed, moderated or unmoderated. NECTAS has established 3 client-based lists: for Part C Coordinators, for Section 619 Coordinators, and early childhood project staff. Before establishing each of these groups we had multiple discussions among our staff about purposes, membership, closed/open, content anticipated, etc., etc. Once we established what we thought were reasonable parameters, we set the lists up and subscribed the members (our three client lists are closed to specified clients, our staff, OSEP staff).

Our campus has wonderful resources that make it easy for faculty to use internet-based technologies for instructional purposes. These are available for your review at http://www.unc.edu/courses/ssp. A program called Simple Start introduces faculty and staff to the resources and many of these resources are available free to other educational institutions. There is a web interface for list processing that walks one through the decision making process and actual steps involved in setting up the list. Anyone can access this site and read through the considerations one must weigh in establishing a list. You may be interested in the document:

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"Managing a List" (http://help.unc.edu/cgi-bin/getdocs?docnumber=ieg02). We also use listservs for smaller groups of staff/clients/consultants who are planning meetings. These, as well as the clients lists, are e-mail listservs. Listed below are 2 URLs on the topic of listservs:

1. Zane Berge (a prodigious writer about distance education) and Mauri Collins have put up a Web page with lots of links and resources about moderating elists. The URL is http://star.ucc.nau.edu/~mauri/moderators.html.

2. "E-Mail Discussion Groups/Lists - Resources" (http://www.webcom.com/impulse/list.html)

This web site is a comprehensive resource on the topic of listservs. It contains: Information about listserver software and related topics; Basic Commands for Three Types of Listservers; and, Websites where you can search for discussion lists.

Disadvantages of using listservs:
The degree to which a listserv has structure, that is whether it is closed for only a defined group of subscribers vs. open to the public, or whether it is moderated, impact the time and effort needed to administer the list. Some listservs have problems with spamming and flaming, although that has not been our experience with the NECTAS listservs. One needs also to know that listserv communication is not private. Even with a closed listserv, subscribers have the ability to forward messages from the list to non-subscribers just as with any other e-mail message. Finally, access to the Internet is essential and whether information transmitted to the subscribers will be made available in other formats to non-subscribers is a consideration.

Technology Medium: Web-based conferencing systems (online discussion forums)

Purpose:
There are an expanding range of options for online communication between and among the many individuals and groups who are concerned with sharing and disseminating information about students with disabilities. Until recently, the most effective and reliable telecommunications options were e-mail based (e.g., listservs) or separate bulletin board systems (e.g. the original SpecialNet, NCIP's FirstClass platform which required users to "dial in" with a modem). Despite its more apparent strengths as a medium for dissemination, the Web was not originally a very supportive environment for interactive online discussions. Recently, however, this has started to change, with the emergence of a variety of web conferencing platforms.

Advantages of web-based conferencing:
An online conferencing system that is accessible through the Web has several characteristics which distinguish it from an email-based discussion option such as a listserv. Conversation can be linked to resources--with some conferencing systems. It is possible to create a link directly from a message to another resource on the Web. Conversations can be threaded--as opposed to email based discussions, which are received as individual messages in one's email box, some web-based conferencing systems enable threading. Participants choose if and when to view discussions (as opposed to listserv mailings which automatically arrive in one's e-mail box). The person who sets up the conferences has flexibility to organize the online conversation in a series or hierarchy of discussions and sub-discussions.

Disadvantages:
Not everyone has Web access. The disseminator must rely on the recipient's taking the initiative to access the online discussion (going to the Website conference) vs. email systems, which are automatically received in the recipient's mailbox. There is a learning curve, and sometimes some technical glitches, which have implications for utilizing conferencing systems easily and effectively.

Technology Medium/Issue: Web Site Accessibility

Purpose: To ensure that the information presented at all OSEP TA & D Web sites is available to diverse audiences to the maximum degree possible. Projects can use "Bobby" at http://www.cast.org to analyze their sites' accessibility. Bobby is a web-based public service offered by CAST that analyzes web pages for their accessibility to people with disabilities as well as their compatibility with various browsers. The analysis of accessibility is based on the working draft of the W3C's WAI Page Author guidelines with the Page Authoring Working Group's latest revisions. All pages on your web site must meet these requirements in HTML 4.0 to display the Bobby Approved icon.

The Trace Center site is the best place to start.
http://trace.wisc.edu/world/web/

The universal symbol to use is located here.
http://www.boston.com/wgbh/pages/ncam/symbolwinner.html

Equal Access to software and information at the Rochester Institute of Technology is another well-done site on this topic.
http://www.rit.edu/~easi/index.html

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